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THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTOR,

IN WHICH

THE LEADING DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES OF CHRISTIANITY ARE FAMILIARLY EXHIBITED;

DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF

FAMILIES, SABBATH SCHOOLS, AND BIBLE CLASSES:

AND ESPECIALLY

FOR THE ORAL INSTRUCTION OF THE COLORED POPULATION.

BY A. W. CHAMBLISS.

*** "*Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.*"

*** "*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*"

*** "*Prophesy according to the proportion of faith.*"

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1847.

BX6336
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SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA, To wit:

Be it Known—That on this Twenty-seventh day of June, Anno Domini, 1847, A. W. Chambliss, of said District, hath deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the title of which is in the words following, to wit: "The Catechetical Instructor; in which the leading doctrines and practices of christianity are familiarily exhibited: designed for the use of families, Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, and especially for the oral instruction of the colored population, by A. W. Chambliss," the right whereof, he claims as author in conformity with the act of Congress, entitled "an act to amend the several acts respecting copy rights."

[*L.S.*] JOHN FITTS, *Clerk of said District.*

Dec. 18, 1935

PREFACE.

THE *catechetical* mode of instruction is recommended, principally, on account of the simplicity of its style, and the facility it affords to the teacher to correct any misapprehension of truth existing in the mind of the learner.

The present work was prepared at the direction of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, by whom also, at their late annual session, in November, 1846, it was approved and recommended to the use of the churches.* It contains *four* parts. PART I, illustrates the existence and attributes of God, and the evidences of a divine revelation, sufficient as a rule of faith and manners. PART II, relates to the creation and fall of angels and men. PART III, exhibits the peculiar doctrines of the remedial scheme. PART IV, states the proper organization, officers, ordinances and discipline of the christian church.

The work thus arranged, was mainly designed as an aid to teachers, in the various departments of sabbath school instruction, especially the oral religious instruction of the colored population.— Its object is to exhibit, in a full, easy and connec-

* See Minutes for 1845, p. 4, and 1846, p. 5.

ted form, all the prominent and essential doctrines of the christian religion. Pursuant to this object, a two-fold plan is maintained throughout the entire work:—the first, consisting of questions and answers; and the *second*, of remarks, in the character of additional arguments, illustrations, &c.

The *catechetical portion* of the work, being particularly intended for *all classes of learners*, was prepared with studious regard to simplicity. The questions are, for the most part, direct and leading; and the answers are commonly given in the pure language of scripture, as, at once, the highest authority, and, at the same time, the easiest of understanding.

The *remarks*, at the close of each catechetical lesson, were specially intended for *teachers* and for *general readers:* nevertheless, they may be advantageously, used in ordinary sabbath schools and bible classes, by requiring the learners to state, severally, the substance of one of the arguments.

In presenting this little contribution to the cause of religion and truth, the author can hardly persuade himself, that it is, in all respects perfect. His only apology is, that it is the best his time and circumstances allowed: but should it meet that degree of favor with the christian public, which he has so ardently desired, he promises them a new edition, when he will, most gladly, avail himself of the suggestions of his more experienced and

enlightened co-laborers in the vineyard of his divine Master.

With earnest prayer to him, without whom a Paul might plant and an Appollos water in vain, that he will render it a blessing, both to the teacher and the leaner, this volume is now committed to the judgment and candor of the wise and the good.

A. W. C.

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INTRODUCTION,

BY REV. BASIL MANLY, D.D.

The work contained in the following pages belongs to a class, at once unpretending, yet difficult of execution. It is intended for learners in the elements of religious truth; yet it requires comprehensiveness, accuracy, simplicity. The author seems to have performed his task with studious regard to all these requisites. It is full, and instructive;—adapted to good use in the Sunday schools; whether of whites, or of colored people; youthful or adult. At the same time, simplicity is secured by the admirable adaptation of answers for the questions in the very "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." This is a striking merit which the present work possesses, beyond ordinary Catechisms.

The *Remarks*, added at the close of each lesson, were intended for teachers—to suggest topics for a familiar *talking* Lecture to the classes of learn-

ers. They are original and forcible; often striking: and, in proper hands, it is hoped they will do good. Should the work come into that general use which it is believed to deserve, the Catechetical part, for convenience and cheapness, may be printed in some editions, separate from the "Remarks."

May the laborious and able author reap the highest of all rewards,—the assurance that his work is owned by heaven, in building up the souls of men on the most holy faith.

B. MANLY.

University of Alabama, 1846.

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MORNING PRAYER.

Now I awake and see the light,
'Twas God that kept me thro' the night,
To him I'll lift my voice and pray,
That he may keep me thro' the day:
If I should die before 'tis done
O God accept me thro' thy Son.—*Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take,—*Amen.*

MORNING FORM OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us *this day* our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

EVENING FORM OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come—thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us *day by day* our daily bread: and forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us: and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.—*Amen.*

PRAYER BEFORE MEAL.

O Lord, thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. Grant us a sanctified use of this provision of thy bounty, that it may strengthen our bodies to fulfil thy pleasure. through Christ Jesus our Lord.—*Amen.*

Or thus.

Father of all mercies, from whom we receive every good and perfect gift! with this renewed expression of thy goodness, in providing for our returning wants, grant us the remission of our sins. and give us grace to eat, and drink, and do every thing to thy glory,—for Christ's sake.—*Amen.*

THANKS AFTER MEAL.

Accept of our thanks, Divine Father, for the present supply of our necessities. Continue thy goodness unto us; and especially, feed our souls upon the bread of life, whereof, if a man eat he shall not die :—for thy mercy's sake.—*Amen.*

Or thus.

We give thee thanks, O Shepherd of Israel, that thou hast again supplied our wants with good and wholesome food. Give us grace to devote the strength derived from it to the praise of thy glory; and forbid that our table, should at any time, become a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block unto us: for Christ's sake.—*Amen.*

RELATIVE DUTIES.

RULERS.

"The God of Israel said, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord." 2 Sam. xxiii, 3.

"It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment. He that saith unto the wicked, "Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him." Pro. xxiv, 23, 24.

"It is not good for kings to drink wine; nor princes strong drink: lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted." Pro. xxxi, 4, 5.

Subjects.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Rulers are not a terror to good works; but to the evil. And he is the minister of God to thee for good. For this cause pay ye tribute also. Render to all their dues—tribute to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Rom. xiii, 1–7.

Husbands.

"The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church." "Let every one of you love his wife, even as himself." Eph. v, 23, 25, 28, 33.

Wives.

"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." "As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be unto their own husbands in every thing." Eph. v, 22, 24. Col. iii, 18.

Parents.

"Fathers, provoke not your children; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it:" "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Eph. vi, 4. Pro. xxii, 6. *ib.* xiv, 8.

Children.

"Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." "The eye that mocketh his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens shall pick it out, the young eagles shall eat it." "Cursed be he that setteth lightly by his father or his mother." Col. iii, 20. Pro. i, 8. *ib.* xxx, 17. Deut. xxvii, 16.

Masters.

"Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal: knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." "And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening;

Knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there any respect of persons with him." Col. iv, 1. Eph. vi, 9.

Servants.

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things: not answering again; not purloining; but shewing all good fidelity: that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior." "Servants, be obedient unto them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ:—not with eye-service, as men pleasers; but, as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. Tit. ii, 9–14. Eph. vi, 5, 6. Col. iii, 22–25. 1 Pet. ii, 18.

The Golden Rule.

"Therefore, all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets." Math. vii, 12.

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. No. 1.

GOD.

QUESTION. Who made you?
ANSWER. God made me.

Q. What is God?
A. God is a great Spirit.

Q. How many Gods are there?
A. There is but one true God.

Q. Where is God?
A. Every where.

Q. What does God know?
A. God sees and knows all things.

Q. When did God begin to exist?
A. God has always been, and always will be.

Q. Does God ever change?
A. No. God is unchangeable.

Q. What can God do?
A. God can do every thing.

Q. Will not God always do right?
A. Yes. God is holy: he will not do unjustly, nor speak a lie,

Q. Is not God good and merciful to his creatures?
A. Yes. God is love: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Q. Since then, God is so great, and so good, should we not love and fear him?

A. Yes. We should love and fear the Lord at all times.

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. No. II.

MAN.

QUESTION. Who was the first man?

ANSWER. Adam was the first man, and he was the father of us all.

Q. Out of what was man made?

A. God made man of the dust of the ground.

Q. For what did God make man?

A. God made man to love and glorify him.

Q. How may we glorify God?

A. We glorify God by doing his will, and loving our fellow creatures.

Q. Have you always done the will of God?

A. No. I have sinned and done wickedly.

Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is a transgression of God's law.

Q. Are there any who have not sinned against God?

A, No, All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Q. Whence do the sins of men proceed?

A. Sin comes from a wicked and bad heart.

Q. Have all men got wicked and bad hearts?

A. Yes. The hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.

Q. What is the wages of sin?

A. The wages of sin is death.

Q. What then will become of those who continue in sin?

A. They who continue in sin will be destroyed forever.

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. No. III.

THE REDEEMER.

Q. Who is the Redeemer?

A. Jesus Christ is the Redeemer.

Q. Who is Jesus Christ?

A. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and a divine person.

Q. From what hath Christ Redeemed us?

A. Christ hath redeemed us from the just punishment of sin.

Q. How did Christ redeem us from punishment?

A. Christ redeemed us by dying for us on the cross.

Q. How long has it been since Christ was crucified?

A. Christ was crucified more than eighteen hundred years ago.

Q. What became of Christ after he was crucified?

Q. He was buried; and on the third day he rose again.

Q. Where is he now?

A. Christ hath gone up to heaven, where he ever liveth to intercede for us.

Q. How does the death and intercession of Christ effect our redemption?

A. God the Father pardons our sins and saves us for the sake of his Son, who died for us, and in our stead.

Q. On what condition do we become savingly interested in the death of Christ?

A. We share the benefits of Christ's death, on the condition of repentance and faith.

Q. What is repentance?

A. Repentance is to be very sorry for our sins, and to cease from them.

Q. What is faith?

A. Faith is to take Christ for our Saviour, and to trust in him for eternal life.

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. No. IV.

THE SANCTIFIER.

QUESTION. Who is the Sanctifier?

ANSWER. The Holy Ghost is the Sanctifier.

Q. What is the Holy Ghost?

A. The Holy Ghost is a divine person, equal with the Father and the Son.

Q. How does the Holy Ghost sanctify us?

A. The Holy Ghost sanctifies us by renewing our hearts, and causing us to do well.

Q. Would any one love God, or believe on Christ, if his heart were not renewed?

A. No. The hearts of sinners are filled with unbelief and enmity to God.

Q. What feelings does the Holy Ghost beget in a renewed heart?

A. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.

Q. What is love?

A. Love is a disposition to serve God, and to do good to our fellow men.

Q. What is the joy of the Holy Ghost?

A. Christian joy is a feeling of gladness and delight arising from the favor of God.

Q. What is meekness?

A. Meekness is not to be soon angry.

Q. What is humility?

A. Humility is not to think too highly of ourselves, or of our works; but to be modest and retiring.

Q. Should not all christians and good people be humble, meek, and affectionate?

A. Yes. Pride, anger, and ill-will God hates.

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. No. V.

THE SCRIPTURES.

Q. Where may we learn the will of God?

A. We may learn the will of God in the Scriptures of the old and New Testament.

Q. By whom were the Scriptures written?

A. The Scriptures were written by Prophets and Apostles chosen of God.

Q. How many books do the Scriptures contain?

A. There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New.

Q. Do the Scriptures contain all things necessary to our duty, and our salvation?

A. Yes. The Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Q. How were the Prophets and Apostles enabled to make known the will of God?

A. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Q. Were all the Scriptures written under the direction and influence of the Holy Spirit?

A. Yes. All Scripture was given by inspiration of God.

Q. Do the Scriptures contain any thing that is not true?

A. No. The word of God is true from the beginning.

Q. How then should we study the Scriptures?

A. We should study the Scriptures with faith, and with earnestness of heart.

Q. Can any thing be right for us to do or believe, which is denied in the Bible?

A. No. If men speak not according to this word, there is no light in them.

Q. How should we act with regard to what the Scriptures forbid?

A. We should not do that, which is forbidden in the word of God.

Q. How should we act with regard to what the Scriptures command?

A. We should do all things commanded in the word of God.

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. No. VI.

THE MORAL LAW.

QUESTION. What does God require in the *first* commandment?

ANSWER. The Lord saith, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Q. What is required in the *second* commandment?

A. Thou shalt not worship idols, nor bow down to them.

Q. What is required in the *third* commandment?

A. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in a vain manner.

Q. What is the *fourth* commandment?

A. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Q. What is the *fifth* commandment?

A. Honor thy father and thy mother.

Q. What is the *sixth* commandment?
A. Thou shalt not kill.

Q. What is the *seventh* commandment?
A. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Q. What is the *eighth* commandment?
A. Thou shalt not steal.

Q. What is required in the *ninth* commandment?

A. Thou shalt not bear false-witness against thy neighbor.

Q. What is required in the *tenth* commandment?

A. Thou shalt not covet any thing that belongs to thy neighbor.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN VERSE.

I. Thou shalt have no other gods but me,
II. Before no idol bow thy knee,
III. Take not the name of God in vain,
IV. Nor dare the Sabbath day profane.
V. Give both thy parents honor due;
VI. Be sure that thou no murder do.
VII. Abstain from words and thoughts unclean
VIII. Nor steal, though thou art poor and mean:
IX. Nor make a wilful lie, nor love it
X. What is thy neighbors dare not covet.

THE UNIVERSAL RULE.

Render, therefore, unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God, the things that are God's. Mat. xxii. 21.

THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTOR.

PART I.

LESSON I.

GOD—THE EXISTENCE OF.

QUESTION. What is the first great truth in Religion?

ANSWER. The first great truth of Religion is, "There is one God." Mark xii. 32.

Q. Can any person be religious who believes there is no God?

A. No. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. xi. 6.

Q. How do men know that there is a God?

A. That which may be known of God is manifest unto them; for God hath showed it unto them. Rom. i. 19.

Q. In what way hath God revealed himself to mankind?

A. The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made. Rom. i. 20.

Q. Do not the Heavens, as well as the Earth, declare that there is a God of great power and wisdom?

A. Yes. The Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Psalms xix. 1.

Q. Are not the refreshing rains and fruitful seasons—spring, summer, autumn, and winter—evidences that there is a God?

A. Yes. God hath not left himself without a witness, in that, he did good and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. Acts xiv. 17.

Q. When you go forth in the morning, and behold the sun rising in all his glory, of what are you reminded?

A. I am reminded that there is a God, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. Mat. v. 45.

Q. Who made all these things—the Earth, and the Heavens, the sun, and the rains?

A. God made Heaven and Earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein. Acts xiv. 15.

Q. Have not all men these evidences of a God?

A. Yes. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Psalms xix. 2, 3.

REMARKS.

First. "*The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God:* and surely he must be a fool who should say it: nor can even the fool assert such things, save in his heart. It were, indeed, a matter of astonishment, that any intelligent and sensible person should behold the earth spread out into hills and mountains, and seas and oceans; or looking up to the Heavens, should contemplate the immense magnitudes of those worlds above, and the uninterrupted harmony of their motions for thousands of years, without feeling the convictions of the Godhead rising in his heart."

Secondly. *If there is a God who hath made all things, how industriously should we study his character and will!* Who is God? For what purpose hath he made this vast universe, and peopled it with every species of existence, both animate and inanimate? These are important questions, and invite us to an employment at once interesting and profitable. "His divine power hath given unto us all things, that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him." There-

fore, "acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace; whereby good shall come unto thee."

THIRDLY. If there is a God, let us walk worthy of him. It was a great crime of the ancient philosophers, that "when they knew God they glorified him not as God:" and many in our days who "profess that they know God, in works deny him—being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." They who neglect his service—despise his people—forsake his ordinances, and contemn his authority: what better are these than "the fool, who hath said in his heart there is no God?" We should worship him that made Heaven, and Earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. xiv. 7.

LESSON II.

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES—A DIVINE REVELATION.

QUESTION. Has God revealed himself to mankind in any other way than by the works of creation?

ANSWER. Yes. We have, also, a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto, ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light, that shineth in a dark place. 2 Peter i. 19.

Q. What is the sure word of prophecy, which is as a light that shineth in a dark place?

A. The sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testiment. These are a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Psalms cxix. 105.

Q. By whom did God, at different times, thus make known his character and will to men?

A. God, at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets; but hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, and by his holy apostles. Heb. i. 1, 2—2 Peter iii. 2.

Q. How were the prophets and apostles enabled to understand and to make known the character and will of God?

A. The prophecy came not in old time by the will of men; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter i. 21—1 Cor. ii. 10–13.

Q. Did the prophets and apostles say that they thus spake by revelation.

A. Yes. St. Paul said, I certify you brethren, that the Gospel, which was preached of me, is not after man: for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. i. 11, 12. Num. xxii. 38, *ib.*

xxiii. 5. Isaiah i. 20. Jer. xxv. 3. Acts iv. 8, *ib.* xv. 28.

Q. Did the early Christians receive the words of the apostles and prophets as a revelation from God.

A. Yes. When they received the word of God, which they heard of the apostles, they received i not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God. 1 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Kings xvii. 24. Luke i. 70. John ix. 29. Acts i. 16, *ib.* xxviii. 25.

Q. Were all the Scriptures given by inspiration?

A. Yes. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

REMARKS.

There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New, which we receive as a divine revelation: and we submit the following as additional evidence of their inspiration.

First. *The majesty of the things they teach.* For the most part, the writers of the sacred volume "were ignorant and unlearned men:" and yet in a style of wonderful simplicity, familiarity and ease, they teach the most cultivated minds of the most cultivated ages, wisdom, upon all the

sublime doctrines of God and the soul of time and eternity. How is it possible to account for this superiority of knowledge in such men, but upon the supposition that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?

SECONDLY. *The miracles they record.* A miracle is an extraordinary effect produced by almighty power, out of the ordinary course of nature. It is admitted that they were frequently performed by the persons whose names are mentioned as the writers of the Old and New Testament. They were appealed to, and received by the people who witnessed them, as conclusive evidence that those who produced them, were teachers sent from God. Thus, for example, when the prophet Elijah raised to life the widow's son of Zarephath, by means aside from those that were ordinary and natural, she exclaimed: "Now by this, I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth, is the truth." 1 Kings xvii. 24. Ex. iii. 12, *ib.* iv 1–9. John iii. 2, *ib.* v. 36, *ib.* xiv. 10, 11. Acts xix. 11, 12. Romans xv. 18, 19. 2 Cor. xii. 12.

THIRDLY. *The prophecies they contain.* To prophesy, is to foretell future events. The writings of the sacred penmen abound with predictions concerning things future; many of which have already been literally fulfilled, in the persons, cities, nations and empires foretold. Now, the question which we would propose to any who may doubt the inspiration of the Scriptures is, by what means were the apostles and prophets enabled to

foreshow, with such astonishing accuracy, the events that should occur for centuries and generations to come? The facts are incontrovertible; and their explanation can be found only in the admission that the divine illumination rested upon those who delivered such prophecies. Accordingly, the foretelling of future events is by the Deity himself, made a criterion for distinguishing those who were inspired by his spirit, from those who were not. Is. xli. 19–29, *ib.* xlv. 20, 21, *ib.* xlvi. 9, 10, *ib.* xlviii. 3–14.

Fourthly. *The striking and universal concurrence of all their parts.* The sacred penmen were cotemporaneous with no one age; nor were they all inhabitants of any one country. "They succeeded each other during a period of fifteen hundred years. Some of them were priests or princes; other were shepherds or fishermen. Their natural abilities, education, habits and employments were exceedingly dissimilar. They wrote laws, history, prophecy, odes, devotional exercises, proverbs, parables, doctrines and controversies. Each man had his distinct department. And yet they all exactly coincide in the exhibitions which they give us of the perfections, works, truths and will of God; of the nature, situation, and obligations of man—of sin and salvation—of this world and the next: in a word—of all things connected with our duty, safety, interest and comfort." Whence is this universal agreement, under circumstances so unequal? It can be reasonably accounted for only on one suppo-

sition, viz: that they all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But—

Finally. *Their tendency to elevate the moral and intellectual character of man.* It is an historical fact, which needs no argument to substantiate, that civilization, learning, and piety to God, attain their widest extent, and their highest degree of perfection, only in those countries, and among those nations, where the Christian Scriptures in their purity are understood, and are recognized as authority. In every place, they come to man as the Good Samaritan, and hasten to alleviate his woes. The laws which they propose, the invitations they offer, the promises they extend, and the fearful premonitions by which all these are enforced, bear directly upon the restraining of vice, and the cultivation of virtue—bear directly upon the reformation of all classes and of all orders of society, from the infant of days, to the hoary-headed sire—from the menial that grinds at the mill, to the crowned monarch that sits the vicegerant of God on Earth. To this meliorating tendency of their doctrines and precepts, they specifically allude, as their highest style of evidence of divine authenticity; and with distinctness caution us to receive nothing as a revelation from God, however authenticated, to which this evidence is wanting. "If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, *Let us go after other gods*, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Deut. xiii. 1–3. Isaiah ii. 2–5, *ib.* xi. 1–9. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

LESSON III.

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES—THEIR COMPLETENESS AND SUFFICIENCY.

QUESTION. Why did the holy men of old write their words in a book?

ANSWER. They said, I have written unto thee excellent things in counsel and knowledge, that I might make thee *know the certainty* of the words of truth. Pro. xxii. 20, 21. Luke i. 3, 4. John xx. 31.

Q. To whom are the Scriptures given?

A. Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever. Dieut. xxix. 29. Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15.

Q. For what purpose were the Scriptures given to mankind?

A. Whatever things were written afore-time,

were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Rom. xv. 4. 1 Cor. x. 11.

Q. Do the Scriptures contain all things necessary to our salvation?

A. Yes. The Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. iii. 15–17. 2 Peter i. 4. Psalms xix. 7.

Q. Will God ever make another and new revelation to mankind?

A. No if any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accusred. Gal. i. 8, 9. 2 Thess. ii. 2.

Q. What hath God said he will do unto him who shall add any thing to his word?

A. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. Rev. xxii. 18. Deut. iv. 2. Pro. xxx. 6.

Q. What will God do unto the man who shall take away any thing from the Scriptures?

A. If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life. Rev. xxii. 19 Deut. xii. 32.

Q. What is said of those who read, and hear, and keep the word of God?

A. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein. Rev. i. 3. Josh. i. 8. Psalms xix. 11. 1 Cor. xi. 2. James i. 25.

REMARKS.

In a literal sense, the term "Scripture" is applicable to any written document whatever: nevertheless, by the consent of universal usage, it is now applied to the sacred writings of the Old and New Testament alone. We offer the following, as presumptive evidence that these sacred writings have not been corrupted or altered in the smallest important sense.

First. *Their present fidelity.* No possible motive could exist to tempt a mutiliation of the sacred Scriptures, unless to render their descriptions less offensive, or their sentiments more congenial to the taste and feelings of carnal men. In this event, the objectionable features, and those most liable to alteration, had been such portions as stained their pride, censured their faults, condemned their vices and curbed their passions. These had been regarded the divine irregularities, which required the refining and polishing hand of the copyist. But nothing of this is apparent. No such marks of expurgation and correction are to to be found upon their face. With a frankness, plainness, and candor which forbids such a con-

jecture, they still represent human character to the life—they still denounce human follies—they still, in pictures the most abject and humiliating, prostrate the haughtiest spirit in the dust!

Secondly. *There is no proof whatever that the Scriptures have at any time suffered an alteration in the smallest appreciable degree.* The world has never been destitute of facilities for detecting an event so important as had been a mutillation of the sacred volume; nor yet without motives sufficient for recording it, if, indeed, it had taken place. At a very early period after their publication, and in accordance with special regulations which they enforced, both the Old and New Testament were extensively and intimately understood among Jews and Christians respectively. Transcripts, paraphrases, harmonies, and commentaries upon the one and the other were multiplied and increased. In public and in private, they were taught and revered by all classes, from the greatest to the smallest, as the most sacred and divine communications to man. Tribes, parties, sects and communities, arose and flourished under both the former and the latter dispensation, of whose personal and denominational interests, the uncorrupted Scriptures were esteemed the only impregnable defence. They were the guardian of the rights and privileges of magistrates and subjects, of priests and people; and by a mutual jealousy every man watched his brother. Ephraim envied Judah, and Judah guarded Ephraim. The Christian dared not add a line, and the Jew dared not

expunge one. The Orthodox stood ready to record so nefarious an act in the heretic; and the heretic was equally prepared to thrust it home upon the orthodox. The multitude looked askance upon the few; and the few, in like manner, narrowly surveyed the conduct of the multitude. Where then was the possibility that any one man, or any body of men, should make the slightest alteration in their sacred contents without detection? Who dared to make the risk? History records not the first instance of such an attempt! Prophets and apostles, the Son of God and the Christian Church, from time immemorial, inveighed against a universal defection in man. They point us to their multitudinous crimes of every grade and of every description. They tell us of the false glosses which some gave to the divine oracles; and of the superior regard with which others beheld human traditions. But they no where mention the man who dared to insert a line; nor the man who dared to expunge a line from the sacred Scriptures. How shall we account for such universal silence with regard to this blackest of crimes, if it ever existed?

THIRDLY. If, on the one hand, we have no evidence that the Scriptures have been corrupted; *the universal agreement of manuscripts, on the other, shows that they have not been.* The art of printing is of comparatively modern date. Previous to the fifteenth century, the multiplication of books depended alone upon the tardy and laborious effort of the copyist and the transcriber. That

under such circumstances, the copies of the Scriptures should have multiplied less rapidly, and been less accordant with each other than in our times, is what might have been naturally expected. Nevertheless, there was a zeal to disseminate the word of life, manifested among those who feared God, which demands the admiration of the world. The sacred volume underwent various translations, and still more frequent transcriptions in different countries, into different languages, and in different ages. Of those manuscripts, not less than eleven hundred copies of the Old Testament, and nearly four hundred of the New, have already been collected and carefully compared: and, what is passing astonishment, such is their uniform and striking agreement, that the most laborious collations, embracing, in some instances, not less than one hundred and fifty thousand different readings, afford scarcely an opportunity to correct our received text in a solitary *important* passage. "All the *omissions* (occasioned by carelessness, accident, or otherwise) put together, could not countenance the omission of one essential doctrine of the gospel, relating to either faith or morals; and all the additions, countenanced by the whole mass of manuscripts already collated, do not introduce a single point essential to faith or manners, beyond what may be found in our admitted Scriptures." "This general conformity of the manuscripts of the Old and New Testament, respectively, which are scattered through all the known world, and in so great a variety of langua-

ges, is truly wonderful; and demonstrates the veneration in which the Scriptures have been uniformly held, and the extraordinary care which was taken in transcribing them: and so far are the various readings contained in these manuscripts from being hostile to the uncorrupted preservation of the sacred oracles, that they afford us additional and most convincing proof, that they exist at present, in all essential points, precisely the same as when they left the hands of their authors." "I have written unto thee excellent things in counsel and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth."

LESSON IV.

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES—THEIR EXCELLENCY AND STUDY.

QUESTION. For what did you say the Scriptures are profitable?

ANSWER. The Scriptures are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Q. To what standard should we refer all our opinions and practices?

A. To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah viii. 20. Jer. xxiii. 28.

Q. Can we serve God acceptably in an unscriptural manner?

A. No. God says, In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Mat. xv. 9. Col. ii. 8. Tit. i. 13, 14.

Q. How should we, therefore, receive the word of God?

A. We should give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Heb. ii. 1. Luke viii. 18.

Q. For what were the Beræans particularly commended?

A. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so. Acts xvii. 11. 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11. 1 Peter ii. 1, 2.

Q. What did Moses command the Jews with regard to the law?

A. Moses said, These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and

shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up. Deut. vi. 6, 7, *ib.* xi. 18, 19.

Q. Did the apostle give a similar command to the Christian Church?

A. Yes. He said, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom—teaching and admonishing one another. Col. iii. 16.

Q. When we hear or read the word of God, should there not be in our heart a disposition to do what it says?

A. Yes. If any man wish to do his will, he shall know the doctrine. John vii. 17. Hos. vi. 3.

Q. What is said of that man who shall do what God's word commands?

A. Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James i. 25. Ps. xix. 11. Mat. vii. 24–27. James ii. 21–26.

REMARKS.

First. *The Scriptures are our only rule of faith and practice.* The opinions of men, however expressed, in sermons, creeds, confessions, or commentaries, are worth nothing, only in so far as they strictly conform to, and are supported

by the word of God. The same is true of our private thoughts, feelings and customs. It is not enough to say, "I think so," or "I feel like it," or "It is customary," unless our thoughts, feelings and customs, have the sanction of the sacred oracles. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell it as a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff beside the wheat?" saith the Lord. Isaiah viii. 20. Jeremiah xxiii. 28.

Secondly. *Ignorance of the Scriptures is the greatest source of religious errors.* It is not sufficient that men are learned in worldly wisdom. The kingdom of God is not the same in its nature, principles and government, with the kingdoms of this world. The laws and purposes of the divine government must be studied in the Scriptures mainly. "Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." "O Lord, thou through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients; because I keep thy precepts. Mathew xxii. 29. Psalms cxix. 98–100.

Thirdly. *The best method of interpreting Scripture, is by the Scriptures themselves.* Study their scope and design, the characters to whom they are addressed, and the objects they contemplate, and then harmonize all their parts, so as to

preserve a "unity" in the faith, and a proportion in the faith. "Having gifts differing, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of the faith." "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. Romans xii. 6. 1 Peter iv. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

FOURTHLY. *There are portions of the sacred Scriptures which require a particularly high degree of religious cultivation and spirituality of mind to rightly understand.* "Account, that the long suffering of God is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you, as also, in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which some things are hard to be understood; which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." "For when for a time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." For the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can

he know them; because they are spiritually discerned. But the spiritual judgeth all things." 2 Peter iii. 15, 16. Hebrews v. 12, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15, *ib.* iii. 1, 2.

LESSON V.

GOD—A SPIRIT.

QUESTION. What do the Scriptures teach us that God is?

ANSWER. God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. John iv. 24. Proverbs xxiii. 26. Mathew xxii. 37. Romans i. 9. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Phil. iii. 3.

Q. Hath a spirit flesh and bones, which we may see and handle, as man hath?

A. No. A spirit hath not flesh and bones. Luke xxiv. 39.

Q. Is not God in every place?

A. Yes. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Proverbs xv. 3. Job xxxiv. 21. Prov. v. 21. Jeremiah xxxii. 19. Hebrews iv. 13.

Q. Does not God hear every word that men speak?

A. Yes there is not a word in my tongue, but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Psalms cxxxix. 4. Mathew xii. 36, 37.

Q. Is there any thing in man which God does not know?

A. No. He needeth not that any should testify of man, for he knoweth what is in man. John ii. 25. Ps. lxliv. 11. Jer. xii. 3. 1 Cor. iii. 20.

Q. Hath any man ever seen the shape of God?

A. No. No man hath seen God's shape at any time. John i. 18, *ib.* v. 37. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

Q. When God came down upon Mount Sinai and gave his law to the Jews, did they not see something that resembled him?

A. No. The Lord spake unto them out of the midst of the fire: they heard the voice of the words, but they saw no similitude. Deuteronomy iv. 12–15.

Q. Is there, really, any thing in Heaven, or in Earth, that can be likened or compared to God?

A. No. There is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works. Psalms lxxxvi. 8, *ib.* cxxxix. 6. Isaiah xl. 18, *ib.* xlvi. 9.

Q. Since, then, God is in every place—hearing the words and knowing the thoughts of all men; and since no man has ever seen God, or any thing like him, or that may be compared unto him, must he not be an infinite spirit?

A. Yes. God is an infinite spirit.

REMARKS.

First. *We should distinguish between the divine essence of the Godhead, and the symbols or appearances, in which, God for special purposes, and on special occasions, manifested himself to men.* In Exodus xxxiii. 20, when Moses desired to behold the divine "glory," God said unto him, "thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live:" and yet in Genesis xxxii. 30, it is said that Jacob "saw God face to face." The former expression alludes to the glory of the divine essence, which the corporeal senses of mortals are incapable of apprehending: the latter, to that human body which he was pleased to assume, for a special occasion, and for a special purpose. The truth is, this latter passage, carefully compared with other portions of the sacred volume, (Genesis xxviii. 15, *ib.* xlviii. 16. Ex. xxiii 20, *ib.* xxxiii. 14. Isaiah lxiii. 9. Hosea xii. 4. Malachi iii. 1) will be seen to relate to the *second person* of the trinity—who was, under the old dispensation, variously styled, "God," "an angel," "the angel of the presence," "the messenger of the covenant," &c., and *not the father*,

or *first person* of the Godhead—of whom we ordinarily speak, when we say, that "God is a spirit."

Similar observations to those above, apply to Isaiah vi. 1–5, John xiv. 9, and every passage wherein men are said to have seen God. In such expressions, nothing more is meant, than that, by some symbol, (not similitude) form, or other expression, the *divine perfections* are, or were exhibited. God is a spirit, whose essence is invisible, and intangible, by mortal senses.

SECONDLY. *We shall hereafter remark, that angels are also spirits: but a striking difference must be observed between angelic spirits, and God.* Angels are created spirits; God is an uncreated spirit. Angels are finite spirits; God is an infinite spirit. Angels are dependent spirits—dependent for their existence and happiness upon God, who is an independent spirit.

THIRDLY. *If God is an uncreated and infinite spirit, he does not depend upon any creature for happiness or glory: neither can he be injured by any malice or wickedness they may practice.* "God is not worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing: seeing he giveth to all life, and breath and all things." Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?" Look unto the Heavens, and see: and behold the clouds, which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth

he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man, as thou art: and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, 'Thou art my God; my goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the saints that are in the earth; and to the excellent in whom is all my delight." "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." Acts xvii. 25. Job xxii. 2, *ib.* xxxv. 5–8. Psalms xvi. 2, 3. Proverbs ix. 12.

Fourthly. *If God is an invisible and infinite spirit, how vain and how wicked it must be, to attempt to make any image, or resemblance to him!* Not even should we attempt to form an image, or shape, or appearance, in our minds to compare it unto him, "To whom will ye liken that God," whom no man hath seen? "or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" "Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves, lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure—the likeness of male or female—the likeness of any beast that is on the earth—the likeness of any winged foul that flieth in the air—the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground—the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth: and lest, when thou lift up thine eyes unto Heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the hosts of Heaven, thou shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole Heaven." Isaiah xl. 18. Deut. iv. 15–19.

LESSON VI.

GOD—THE UNITY OF.

QUESTION. How many Gods are there?

ANSWER. There is one God. Mark xii. 32. Deuteronomy vi. 4. 1 Corinthians vii. 4–6.

Q. Is there not also another besides that one?

A. No. The Lord, he is God: there is none else besides him. Deuteronomy iv. 35. Isaiah xlv. 21. 1 Samuel ii. 2.

Q. Is there not something that may be likened or compared unto God?

A. No. There is none like unto the Lord our God. Exodus viii. 10. 1 Chronicles xvii. 20. Isaiah xlvi. 5.

Q. Is the same God in Heaven, which we worship on earth?

A. Yes. The Lord, he is God in Heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Deut. iv. 39. Ps. cxxxv. 6. Dan. iv. 35.

Q. If, then, there is but one true God, what are all the gods of the Heathen?

A. All the gods of the nations are idols. Ps. lxlvi. 5.

Q. What is an idol?

A. The idols of the Heathen are silver and gold and other things, the work of men's hands set up to be worshipped. Ps. cxxxv. 15. Isaiah xl. 19, 20, *ib.* xlvi. 6. Jeremiah x. 2–5.

Q. Does not God forbid the worship of idols?

A. Yes. Ye shall make you no idols, nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land to bow down to it. Lev. xxvi. 1. Ex. xx. 4, 5. Acts xiv. 15, *ib.* xv. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 16.

Q. What will be the consequence if we worship idols?

A. If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you, that ye shall surely perish. Deuteronomy viii. 19, *ib.* xxvii. 15. Psalms lxlvii. 7.

Q. Whom, then, should men worship?

A. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Mat. iv. 10. Deut. vi. 13. Isaiah viii. 13, 14. 1 Thessalonians i. 9.

REMARKS.

First. In the present lesson, we refer, not to a unity of the *persons* of the Godhead; but to the unity of the *divine nature or essence.* The Hebrew word, *Elohim*, translated God, in our English

Bibles, is confessedly *plural* in its form; and is used indifferently in connexion, with verbs, adjectives, and pronouns, either in the singular or plural number. Hence, it has been justly remarked, that the word, God, may denote, either, *the plurality of divine persons; or the unity of the divine essence* of the Godhead. It will be seen hereafter, that the works of creation are ascribed equally to *three divine persons*, called in the original of Ecclesiastes xii. 1, "creators;" but, in Genesis i. 1, where it is said, "In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth," the *plural noun Elohim*, being used with a *singular verb* (*bara*—created) points out, and not obscurely, that these three *persons* enter essentially into *one God*—by whom all things were made.

SECONDLY. *The unity of design and agency, in creation and providence, is additional evidence, that there is but one God.* "So far as we are able to understand the works of creation and providence, we discern a general simplicity and harmony, in the nature and operations of all things. Amid the immense complication that surrounds us, we perceive *one set of laws*, in accordance with which all things proceed in their course. The same causes produce the same effects in every place, and in every age. The same vegetables universally spring from the same seeds, germinate by the same means, assume the same form, sustain the same qualities, exist through the same duration, and come to the same end. Animals are born in one manner, exhibit the same life,

powers and tendencies. Man has one origin, system of faculties, character and termination. All things in the world are in one regular manner, made subservient to his use and happiness: and are plainly fitted by one design and conducted by one agency to this end. Thus, every thing so far as our knowledge extends, presents to our view, but a *single design*, regularly executed by a *a single agency*. This unity of design is proof that there is but one designer; and the unity of this agency, proves that there is but one great agent, namely, God."

THIRDLY. *The unity of the true God, excludes every other god—every other object of religious worship.* The history of religion among all heathen nations, has ever been the history of "gods many and lords many." The ancient Persians had twelve principal deities; beside a great number of inferior ones. The Greeks worshipped thirty thousand gods. The Egyptians had an hundred and fifty thousand: and in the emphatic language of a celebrated historian, "the Roman empire was a republic of gods. The Romans importing to their temples all the deities of the nations whom they conquered, they became literally without number. These gods, however, were idols; the workmanship of their own hands. "They had mouths, but they spake not; eyes had they, but they saw not; they had ears, but they heard not; neither was there any breath in their mouth. They that made them, were like unto them—foolish: so every one that trusteth in

them." To us, there is but one God, the Father, and we in him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, and we by him." Psalms cxxxv. 15–18. 1 Corinthians viii. 4–6.

FOURTHLY. *If there is but one God, there can be but one true Religion.* Divers religions are not less false than divers gods. "One Lord, one faith," is a doctrine as clearly taught by reason as by revelation. To suppose that every sort of religion is equally acceptable to God, is of the same species of absurdity, as if we should say, that "God can deny himself." We should preserve the unity of the faith with as much zeal, as we do the unity of the Godhead. The two are inseparable: and he that denies the one, will soon deny the other. He that says "God is not one and the same in every place," is an atheist: and he that says, "Religion is not the same in all times and places," is an infidel. Both are false, and alike dangerous to the honor of God, and the eternal well-being of the soul.

LESSON VII.

GOD—THE ETERNITY OF.

QUESTION. Was there ever a period when God did not exist?

A. No. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou, Lord, hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Psalms lxl. 2, *ib.* lxliii. 2. Isaiah lxiii. 16.

Q. Was there any being in existence before the Lord?

A. No. Thus saith the Lord, I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. Isaiah xliv. 6, *ib.* xliii. 10. Rev. i. 8, *ib.* xxii. 13.

Q. Will God ever cease to exist?

A. No. Thou, Lord shalt endure forever, and thy remembrance to all generations. Psalms cii. 12, 27, *ib.* cxxxv. 13. Lam. v. 19. Job xxxvi. 26.

Q. Is not the Lord called an everlasting king?

A. Yes. The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king. Jeremiah x. 10. Psalms x. 16, *ib.* xlv. 6. 1 Timothy i. 17.

Q. What is said of the duration of his kingdom?

A. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation. Daniel iv. 3, 34. Psalms cxlv. 13.

Q. You said, that the Lord is a living God, does he depend upon any other being for his life?

A. No. The Father hath life in himself. John v. 26.

Q. Will God ever die and cease to be?

A. No. God saith, I lift my hand to Heaven, and say, I live forever. Deuteronomy xxxii. 40.

Q. What does God inhabit?

A. The high and lofty one inhabiteth eternity. Isaiah lvii. 15.

REMARKS.

First. There are three kinds of existence: (1) *That which had a beginning, and will have an end:* as the heavens and the earth, which were created only for a temporary use, and will pass away with a great noise: (2) *That which had a beginning, but will have no end;* as angels and men, whose nature was formed for an eternal duration: (3) *That which had no beginning, and will have no end.* Such is the divine existence. Whatever reason there is to prove, that God exists at all, will equally prove, that he has always existed —that he is uncaused and self-existent. If there had ever been a period when there was no God, then, there never could have been a God, unless that which did not itself exist, could create something else. On the contrary, that which has always existed, and does still exist independently of every thing else, must exist forever.

Secondly. *Every idea of succession must be excluded from the eternity of God.* Time is made up of a succession of moments; and however great may be the number of its periods, they must have had a beginning, and will have an end. A

large number of these periods constitute old age, and a small number is youth. It were, however, exceedingly incorrect and irreverent to speak of God as once young and now old. The divine existence is properly an *eternal now*. "I AM," (in the present tense) was the appellation by which he would be known thousands of years ago; and it will be equally appropriate, millions of ages to come. Time, whether long or short, appertains only to creatures. The revolution of the seasons no more affects the duration of God, than does the turning of a ring approach its end. His mysterious and incomprehensible existence, at one and the same moment, fills all the boundless and immeasurable depths of eternity; past, present, and to come. So far is he removed from the admeasurements of time, that "with him, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "The heavens shall perish, but he shall endure: yea all of them shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shall he change them and they shall be changed. But he is the same and his years shall have no end. 2 Peter iii, 8. Psalms cii. 25, 26.

THIRDLY. *The eternity of God, renders him an object supremely worthy of the hopes and fears of all intelligent creatures.* Happiness and woe derive their principal importance from their duration. For this reason we forego temporary good, that we may obtain that which is more lasting. For this reason, we submit to momentary pain, rather than endure that which is more abiding. But

whither shall the panting spirit fly to enjoy a good which knows no alloy, but to the smiles of an everlasting God? Whither shall it seek a refuge from the storms and ills of mortal life, but to the bosom of an eternal God? Or what evils can the soul endure to be compared with those which are poured out by the hand of that being whose nature knows no change world without end? "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver." Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear. Fear him, which after he hath killed the body, hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell: yea I say unto you, fear him. Psalms l. 22. Luke xii. 4, 5. Mat. x. 28.

LESSON VIII.

GOD—THE OMNIPOTENCE OF.

QUESTION. Is not the Lord a being of great power?

ANSWER. Yes. The Lord is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Job ix. 4, 19, *ib.* xxxvi. 5. Psalms lxii. 11, *ib.* lxliii. 1. Genesis xvii. 1. Exodus vi. 1. Revelation xix. 6.

Q. You said in the first lesson, that God made the heavens and the earth: by what means did he make all these things?

A. The Lord made the heavens and the earth by his great power and his stretched out arm. Jer. xxxii. 17, *ib.* x. 12, *ib.* xxvii. 5. Psalms lxlv. 5. Isaiah xl. 26. Romans i. 20.

Q. How are the earth, and heavens, and all things preserved and upheld?

A. The Lord upholdeth all things by the word of his power. Hebrews i. 3. Nehemiah ix. 6. Psalms xxxvi. 6. Colossians i. 16, 17.

Q. Is there any creature in Heaven or on earth—men or angels, able to resist the great power of God?

A. No. The Lord doeth according to his will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand. Dan. iv. 35. Job ix. 12, *ib.* xi. 10, *ib.* xii. 14, *ib.* xxxiv. 29. Psalms cxxxv. 6. Ephesians i. 19–23.

Q. Has not God the power to subdue all his enemies under his feet?

A. Yes. The Lord is able to subdue all things unto himself. Philippians iii. 21. 1 Samuel ii. 9. Job ix. 4, *ib.* xii. 21. Ps. xxxiii. 16. Is. xlv. 9. Mat. x. 28. James iv. 12. Rev. xx. 13.

Q. By what means are the hearts of men changed, so that from unbelievers, they become believers?

A. Man's heart is in the hands of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will. Their faith stands, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Proverbs xxi. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 5. Ps. cx. 3. Jer. xiii. 23, *ib.* xxxi. 18. Lam. v. 21. Acts xviii 27. 1 Cor. iii. 5–7. 2 Cor. iv. 7. Eph. ii. 8–10. Philippians i. 29, *ib.* ii. 12, 13. 2 Thes. i. 11. Hebrews xii. 2.

Q. Is not the Lord as able to preserve his people in faith unto the end of life, as he is to give them faith at the first?

A. Yes. I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 2 Tim. i. 12. Ps. cxxxviii. 8. Is. liv. 17. John x. 28, 29. Romans viii. 35–9. 1 Cor. x. 13. Phil. i. 6. 1 Peter i. v. Jude xxiv.

Q. It is an evidence of our weakness, that, when we carry a heavy burden for a long time, we become very tired: does God, in like manner, become weary with upholding all things, and preserving and protecting his people?

A. No. The everlasting God, the Lord, the

Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. Is. xl. 28, 15, 17. Ps. cxxi. 3–8.

Q. If, then, God made and upholds all things, without becoming weary, and if there is no power in Heaven or earth that can resist his hand, if he changes the hearts of his people, and is able to subdue the wrath of his enemies, is there any thing which he can not do?

A. No. I know, O Lord, that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be with-holden from thee. Job xlii. 2. Genesis xviii. 14. Mat. xix. 26. Luke i. 37, *ib.* xviii. 27. Rom. iv. 21. Ephesians iii. 20.

REMARKS.

First. The divine power is of three kinds, *which we will call* moral, physical, and constitutional: (1) *It is moral:* This consists in his capacity to will, to choose, to love, to prefer one object above another. (2) *It is physical:* This consists in his capacity to bring to pass events and existences in accordance with his will; or to prevent the existence of such events or occurrences as are opposed to his will. (3) *It is constitutional.* This is nothing more than his authority or right to do whatsoever pleaseth him—to do whatsoever he wills or chooses. To deny either of these to the deity, were to degrade him from the pre-eminence of his true character, as God.

SECONDLY. *The divine power is supreme:* that is, it is underived, uncontrolled, and independent. Men and angels are under the authority of another, viz. God: and receive all their capacity "to will and to do," both in natural and divine things, from him. It is not thus, however, with the Deity. There is no will back of his to prompt him—no authority above his to control him—no power in the face of his to resist him. If we inquire for the authority under which he acts, it will be found only in himself. If we ask for the origin of his will, it is found in himself alone. If we look for the source of his almighty energy, we shall find it only in himself. He is the fountain-head, beyond which there is nothing, and aside from which there is nothing.

THIRDLY. *The divine power is competent to all things which do not imply a contradiction.* When it is said, "It is impossible for God to lie," or "God can not deny himself," or "God can not look upon sin;" let us not understand any deficiency in the divine capacity or authority to perform these several acts; but, that God will do the contrary. The difficulty in these cases, lies not in the insufficiency of God: but in the nature of the subjects. They imply a palpable contradiction, the same as if we were to say, a thing is, and is not, at the same moment. The divine authority, will, and energy, are as absolute, manifest, and perfect, in not doing such things, as they could possibly be in performing them. The only difference is, that they are *wholly* turned in an opposite

direction. Such phrases import nothing more, than that God will not lie—will not deny himself—will not approve sin—that the inclinations of his will are turned with infinite intensity to the contrary of such conduct.

LESSON IX.

GOD—THE OMNIPRESENCE OF.

QUESTION. Is the presence of God confined to any one place on earth?

ANSWER. No. God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Acts xvii. 24, *ib.* vii. 48–50. 2 Chronicles vi. 18.

Q. Where then is God?

A. God is in every place. If I ascend up into Heaven, he is there: if I make my bed in hell, behold! he is there. Psalms cxxxix. 8. Isaiah lxvi. 1. Amos ix. 2. Job xxvi. 6. Pro. xv. 11.

Q. Does not God behold the ways of all men?

A. Yes. The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. Proverbs v. 21. 2 Chronicles xvi. 9. Job xxxi 4, *ib.* xxxiv. 21. Jeremiah xxxii. 19.

Q. Doth not God see and approve those that worship him in every place?

A. Yes. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. Psalms xxxiv. 15. Mathew vi. 6, *ib.* 18, 19, 20. 1 Peter iii. 12.

Q. Is there any place where the wicked may hide themselves from God?

A. No. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from the Lord. Job xxxiv. 22. Ps. cxxxix. 9–12. Jeremiah xxiii. 24. Amos ix. 3.

Q. Is not the life and happiness of all things dependent upon the presence and power of God?

A. Yes. For in him we live and move and have our being. Acts xvii. 28. Psalms xxxi. 15, *ib.* xxxvii. 23, 24. Col. i. 17. Heb. i. 3.

Q. Who feeds all the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea?

A. The eyes of all wait upon the Lord, and he giveth them their meat in due season. He openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. Psalms cxlv. 15, 16, *ib.* civ. 25–28. *ib.* cxlvii. 9. Mathew vi. 26.

Q. Who makes all the grass to grow upon a thousand hills—paints all the beautiful flowers of

the valleys, and spreads all the trees of the forests, so necessary to the comfort and happiness of man and beast?

A. God causeth the grass to grow for cattle, and herb for the service of man. Psalms civ. 14, *ib.* cxlvii. 8, 9. Deut. xi. 15. Mathew vi. 30.

Q. If, then, God sees the ways of all men, and if he feeds every living thing with his own hand, and if he makes every tree, and flower, and grass to grow in its place; must he not be every where at the same time?

A. Yes. Thus saith the Lord, I fill Heaven and earth. Jeremiah xxiii. 24. Isaiah lvii. 15.

REMARKS.

The phrase, "the presence of the Lord," is taken in both a literal and figurative sense. When, for example, it is said, "The presence of the Lord is in every place," it must be understood literally, to import, that there is no place where God is not. But when it is said, that "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod;" (Genesis iv. 16) or that "The wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord;" (2 Thessalonians i. 9) it is, clearly, used in a figurative manner. The divine presence was not less absolute in the land of Nod, than in the garden of Eden; and it will be as manifest in Hell, as in Heaven. In the latter, the milder exhibitions

of his grace will enkindle the joys of the redeemed: while, in the former, the severity of his justice will inflict the eternal torments of the damned. Hence—

First. The divine presence may be manifested in different places at the same time; or in the same place at different times; or in the same place at the same time, for different purposes.

(1) *In different places at the same time, for different purposes:* as in Heaven to bless, or in Hell to punish—in the world to deliver the godly out of temptation, or to ensnare the wicked in their own net—to clothe the lilies of the field, or to feed the young ravens when they cry.

(2) *In the same place at different times, for different purposes.* Where it once promoted and prospered individuals, families and nations, there it may afterwards cast down and destroy nations, families and individuals. The Heathen, for generations, suffered to perish in their blindness, are now beholding the light of the gospel: and "they, who being often reproved, hardeneth their neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

(3) *In the same place at the same time, for different purposes.* The same rays of the sun discover the beauties and deformities of nature—harden the clay and soften the wax. Thus, the same afflictions of Providence wean us from the world, promote our holiness, and better fit us for Heaven and happiness. God takes away our child. The act, at once, reproves our inordinate

fondness for the creature above the Creator, and removes the tender object to a more genial clime.

Secondly. *Be admonished, therefore, neither to repine at the divine providence; nor yet attribute such events to chance, as are not distinctly understood.* Accident and chance are nothing. Nor can the simple laws of nature—as some are wont to call the providence of God—effect any thing, good or evil, of themselves, any more than can the laws of the land reward virtue or punish vice, without the hand of the magistrate. Things may fall out strangely in the world, and sometimes do: but how much better is it to believe that they are all in the hand of an infinitely wise, holy and benevolent being, whose omnipresence will conduct them to the wisest and best of ends, than to ascribe them to the freaks of a blind and senseless chance, or to the stern decrees of a cold and heartless law! God, the omnipresent God, is the sole pervading agent of the universe—the great, moving cause of all the wheels and springs of existence: and no event, however great or small, can take place without him. He numbers every hair of our head—watches every sparrow that falls to the ground, and will make all things work together for good to them that love him. Rom. viii. 28.

LESSON X.

GOD—THE OMNISCIENCE OF.

QUESTION. You said in the last lession, that God is every where present at the same time: is he not then a being of perfect knowledge?

A. Yes. The Lord is a God of knowledge—he is perfect in knowledge. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Job xxxvi. iv., *ib.* xxxvii. 16. Psalms cxlvii. 5. Is. xl. 28. Romans xi. 32.

Q. Was the knowledge of God obtained from any other being?

A. No. None hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him. Isaiah xl. 13, 14. Job xxi 22. Psalms lxliv. 9, 10. Romans xi. 34. 1 Corinthians ii. 16.

Q. Does God's knowledge extend to all things?

A. Yes. Known unto the Lord are all his works from the beginning of the world. Acts. xv. 18. Job. xxvii. 24. Heb. iv. 13. 1 John iii. 20.

Q. Does God know when and where every man will be born—how long he will live, and when and how he will die?

A. Yes. God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations. Acts xvii. 26. Job vii. 1, *ib.* xiv. 15, 16. Psalms xxxix. 4, *ib.* cxix. 84.

Q. Men have a great deal of knowledge, did not God give it to them?

A. Yes: God teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of Heaven: Job xxxv: 11, *ib.* xxxii: 8: Exodus xxxi: 25: 1 Kings iv: 29, *ib.* vii: 14: Proverbs ii: 6: Daniel i: 17: James i: 5.

Q. There is a great deal of pride and hypocrisy, wickedness and blasphemy, in the world; are all these things known unto God?

A. Yes: The Lord saith, I know their manifold transgressions, and their mighty wickedness. Amos v: 12: Genesis vi: 5: Psalms xiv: 2, 3, *ib*: cxxxvii: 6: Revelation ii: 9.

Q. Does God also know the toils and wants, the afflictions and wrongs, which his people suffer?

A. Yes: Thus saith the Lord, I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty. Revelation ii: 9: Genesis xxxi: 42: Exodus iii. 7: 2 Samuel xvi: 12: Mathew vi: 8: Acts vii: 34.

Q. Does not God know all the thoughts, purposes and intentions of men's hearts, even before they are acted out?

A. Yes: The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. 1 Chronicles xxviii: 9: Genesis xviii: 19: Deut: xxxi: 21: 2 Kings xix: 27: Psalms i: vi, *ib.* cxxxix: 2, 3: Isaiah xlviii: 8: Ezekiel xi: 5: Nahum i: 7: 1 Corinthians viii: 3.

Q. You said, above, that God knew all his works from the beginning of the world: has he not actually foretold many of the most important events that occur in the world?

A. Yes: God saith, I am the Lord, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning. Isaiah xlvi: 9, 10: Acts ii. 23: Gal: iii: 8: 1 Peter i: 2.

Q. Is not the plan of redemption by Jesus Christ a most striking display of the wisdom and knowledge of God?

A. Yes: In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and by him God hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Colossians ii: 3: Ephesians i: 8, *ib.* iii: 8–11: 1 Corinthians i: xxiii: 24, *ib.* ii: 6–10.

REMARKS.

First. *The divine knowledge is real and absolute.* Whatever God knows to have existed in times past, or to exist at present, or certain to exist in future, he knows in such a sense and manner, as to preclude every possibility of doubt. No possible supposition can be raised to render questionable the reality of those occurrences, which he knows have already taken place, and in the precise same manner in which he saw them come to pass: nor can any possible contingency or accident arise, to frustrate the occurrence of those events which he foresees will take place hereafter. To say that God foreknows an event will occur, and yet, that some accident may prevent its occurrence, were a palpable contradiction in terms. There is, therefore, either no foreknowledge with God—and all those Scriptures are false which directly and indirectly assert it, or else the events of existence are absolutely certain to occur, as they were foreseen.

Secondly. *The divine knowledge extends both to positive and negative existences:* that is, both to those things which have existed, and may exist; and to those which do not, and can not exist. That it embraces all things that do or may exist, is beyond a question: nor is it less certain that God knows what does not and can not exist. When, for example, God says, in Isaiah xliv: 8, "there is no other God besides me; *I know not any other;*" we are not to imagine that he was ignorant, as to whether there was or was not an-

other: but, that he knew assuredly, there was not another. In like manner, when we say—"God cannot know that a lie is the truth," or that "things equal in themselves are unequal to each other;" we would not imply any ignorance in the divine mind on such subjects; but that he does in the most absolute and perfect sense know that a lie is not the truth;" and that, "things unequal to each other, are not equal in themselves." His knowledge is as real, and as perfect, with regard to negative things, as with regard to those that do or may exist. He knows with as much infallibility what does not, and can not exist, as he does what has occurred, or may come to pass. To say, therefore, "that there are some things which God does know, and some things which he does not know." were false, and tends greatly to degrade the divine character.

THIRDLY. *The divine knowledge is in a strict sense universal and particular.* Every possible existence in the universe, with all the ends which it is to answer, and the means by which it is to be brought about and accomplish its purpose, is at once before his all-pervading eye. If a blade of grass is to grow, or a young raven to be fed—if an empire is to rise or a sparrow fall—if an Adam is to sin, or a Savior bleed—if a world is to be created, or a world to be judged, all the purposes for which the event is to take place, and the means necessary to effect it, with the ten thousand times ten thousand influences, which shall be indirectly exerted by those means, as-

they move on to fulfil their ultimate design, are, at one and the same moment, under the cognizance of his omniscient and searching observation. The *how* he will deliver the godly out of temptation; and the *how* he will reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished, are as much a part of his knowledge, as that he will at all deliver the one and reserve the other. Hence the same infallible certainty attends every occurrence, great or small, immediate or remote, now or in future. God will no more be surprised by the happening of an unforeseen event millions of ages to come, than he will be, with the actual occurrence of his primary design, in the creation and preservation of the world.

Fourthly. *The divine knowledge of the certainty of future events is based upon the divine purpose.* God purposed the events of existence; and, therefore, knows they will take place. If this be not true, then those events come to pass either by accident, or by a simple permission. That they do not take place by accident, is apparent from two considerations. (1) Many of them (a sufficient number to embrace all the rest, as means) are foretold; which is opposed to the idea of accident. (2) Accident, in fact, is nothing—and can accomplish nothing. It is neither cause nor effect. Nor yet do the events of this world take place by a bare permission; because, permission is not so much a real cause of any thing, as it is the absence, or negative of all cause. Furthermore, if God simply permitted the events

of existence to occur, then, either he saw that they would be for the best—all things considered—or he did not. If he did not, then he has permitted events to take place which he knew would not be for the best—which were absurd to suppose. If he did, then, it is certain that the existence of such events form a part of the highest good to the universe, and it were absurd to suppose that he did not purpose them. And surely it must be a source of infinite delight to every pious heart, to reflect, that all the occurrences of this life, however inscrutable, are in precise accordance with the well-digested plans of the divine *counsel*, and a part of the divine *purpose*. How delightful to know that the number of our months, and all our times and springs, are laid with infallible wisdom and goodness in the folds of that divine providence, which is to secure the highest good to an intelligent creation, and the most permanent glory to their Creator! How soul-transporting, to feel that all our ways are directed by his hand, beheld by his eye, and crowned with his smiles! The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, through the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him." 2 Chronicles xvi. 9.

LESSON XI.

GOD—THE IMMUTABILITY OF.

QUESTION. Is God the same now that he has always been?

ANSWER. Yes. God saith, I am the Lord, I change not. Malachi iii. 6. Psalms x. 2, xxv. 27. Lam. iii. 22.

Q. Will God ever change?

A. No. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. James i. 17.

Q. You sometimes make up your mind with regard to certain objects; but afterwards, other reasons occur to alter your opinions and purposes: can any thing new be presented to the divine mind, which, in like manner, shall cause him to change his determinations?

A. No. The Lord is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. Job xxiii. 13. Psalms xxxiii. 11. Proverbs xix. 21. Isaiah xlvi. 10. Hebrews vi. 17. Acts v. 39.

Q. Men sometimes form contracts and enter into agreements which they will not fulfil: will God ever alter his mind, and not fulfil his covenant of grace with his people?

A. No. God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.—2 Samuel xxv. 5. Psalms lxxxix. 29–35. Isaiah lv. 3. Jeremiah xxxii. 40. Hebrews viii. 12, *ib.* x. 16, 17.

Q. In the covenant of grace God hath promised a great many excellent things to his saints: will he ever change his mind, and withhold those blessings?

A. No. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised: who also will do it. Hebrews x. 23. 1 Thes. v. 24. Deut. vii. 9. Joshua xxi. 45.—Rom. iv. 16, 20, 21. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Cor. i. 20. 2 Thes. iii. 3. 1 John i. 9.

Q. Sometimes men become sorry for having conferred certain favors; because they find out they were bestowed upon unworthy objects: does God ever repent of what he has done, in such a sense as to imply a change in his mind?

A. No. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Romans xi. 29. Numbers xxiii. 19. 1 Samuel xv. 29. Ezekiel xxiv. 14.

Q. God hath denounced a great many heavy judgments against those who continue in sin:—will he ever change his purpose and not faithfully execute them?

A. No. Though hand join in hand the wicked shall not go unpunished. Pro. xi. 21. Joshua xxiii. 14. 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 16. Job xi. 20. Psalms xxxvii. 13. Proverbs xxix. 1. Lam. ii. 17. Luke xviii. 17. 2 Thessalonians i. 6–9, Hebrews x. 37. Jude xiv. 15.

Q. Some years ago we heard a great deal about a dark spot which had been discovered on the face of the sun: has any man ever discovered a dark spot of sin in the divine character?

A. No. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 1 John i. v. Exodus xv. 11. Job xxxiv. 10. Psalms xcii. 15,

REMARKS.

The immutability of God refers to his nature, his purpose, and his holy character.

First. *If we would form correct notions of the divine immutability, we must distinguish between his nature and his works.* The works of God are but creatures; all the circumstances and conditions of whose existence are wholly dependent upon the power and will of another. That they should therefore, be subject to continual mu-

tation, is what might be naturally expected. Designed originally for specific ends, and brought into existence for these purposes, they pass on, through continual changes, to the ultimate accomplishment of their primary objects. No such changes, however, attach to divine nature. That God is inherently and necessarily "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," results inevitably from the admission of his independence and self-existence. We might as easily imagine that "the whole is not equal to all its parts;" or that "two and two are not equal to four," as that a being whose very existence, and all of whose attributes, are perfectly independent of every other possible influence, should not be unchangeable in the smallest degree. Every thing, that could be supposed capable of producing any change in his nature, is excluded by the proposition itself. To deny the immutability of the divine nature is, therefore, the same as to deny the independence and self-existence of God—the same as to say he is not God.

SECONDLY. *We must distinguish between the divine purpose and the divine providence.* The providence of God, is, that control and superintendence which he exercises over all things—conducting them with infallible certainty to the great ends for which they were created, and are still preserved. In itself it is exceedingly various and changeable: and often so towards the same individuals. Let us not, however, imagine that God changes his purpose with every change apparent in his providence. The different modes

of the divine dealings with men, do no more imply that he has changed his purpose with regard to them, than do the revolution of the seasons, the eclipses of the sun and moon, or the desolations of storms and tempests sweeping over the world, imply that the fundamental laws of the material universe are changed with each of these events. When it is said, "It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth," or "The Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel;" or that "God repented of the evil, that he said he would do unto the Ninevites, and did it not;" we are not to understand, that something new had occurred to the divine mind in connexion with these several events, and which caused him to really regret what he had done; or in any wise to change his original purpose with regard to them; but simply that his providences had been, or were about to be remarkably changed towards them. Such phrases, it is beyond dispute, are to be taken only in a figurative sense. They are used after the manner of men; and in condescension to mortal weakness. In strict propriety, "God is not man, that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent." (Numbers xxiii. 19. 1 Samuel xv. 29). However various and changable may be the divine providences, his purposes—*embracing all these as means to an end*—remain forever, the same and unalterable. "He is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."

THIRDLY. *We must distinguish between the*

immutability of the divine character and holiness, and the moral conduct of men—who, if you please, are often instruments by which God effects his purpose in the world. One of the greatest embarrassments in many minds, is that which always attends the attempt so to harmonize the agency of men with the divine superintendence, as that the vices of the former shall not detract from the holiness of the latter. If, however, there is any real and necessary connexion between the crimes of men and the holiness of God, we confess, that we have been utterly unable to discover it; nor can it be inferred from any just and correct notions of the divine agency, in the government of the universe. It is beyond contradiction that, the superintendence of God is as direct and universal over the brute and animal creation, as it is over men or angels: and, therefore, we may as readily imagine that the divine nature is affected by all the qualities of the brute creation—that all the qualities of a toad, the venom of a serpent, or the fierceness of a hyena, enter essentially into the divine character; as that his holiness should be affected by the sins of men or angels. Furthermore, it will not be denied, that God does work in every Christian "*to will and to do*," to "work out his salvation with fear and trembling;" and at the same time, does *so* work in him, as not in the least degree to destroy his own voluntariness, (and therefore, praiseworthiness) in thus working out his salvation. In like manner, we see not why he can not *so* work in the hearts of

wicked men to will and to do wickedly, as not in the least sense to destroy their own voluntary agency in willing and doing wickedly, and being blame-worthy to the fullest extent, in such conduct. Hence, when it is said that "God put into their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their power to the beast," (Revelation xvii. 17) or that "he put into their hearts to hate his people," (Psalms cv. 25) we are not to understand that *it was so done* as that the divine holiness was affected by such wicked conduct. The reason is, the actions of men, whether good or bad, are strictly their own, without any regard to the motives, causes, or influences, by which they were occasioned. Their qualities in no sense attach to the divine character to render him more or less holy. The immutability of the divine holiness, results inevitably from the admission of his infinite perfection. If he is not perfect, then, he is not God. If he is—then, nothing can be added to or taken from that perfection. To deny the immutability of the divine holiness, therefore, is the same as to deny his perfection—the same as to say he is not God.

LESSON XII.

GOD—THE VERACITY OF.

QUESTION. You said, in the last lesson, that God is unchangeable: is he not a God of truth?

ANSWER. Yes. The Lord is a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he. Deut. xxxii. 4. Psalms xxxi. 5, *ib.* cxlvi. 6. Jer. x. 10.

Q. Will God ever lie?

A. No. God is not man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent: he hath said and he will do it; he hath spoken and he will make it good. Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Titus i. 2. Hebrews vi. 17, 18.

Q. Men sometimes convey false impressions by mingling some things in their statements which are not true: does God ever say any thing that is not true?

A. No. The word of the Lord is true from the beginning. Psalms cxix. 160. 1 Kings xvii. 24. Nehemiah ix. 13. Psalms xix. 7–9, *ib.* iii. 7. John xvii. 17.

Q. If you intentionally excite an expectation

in the mind of another which you do not strive to fulfil, you are guilty of falsehood: will God ever disappoint an expectation which a right understanding of his word creates?

A. No. The Lord will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry and will save them. Psalms cxlv. 19. I Kings viii. 15. Psalms ix. 18. Proverbs x. 28, *ib.* xi. 7, *ib.* xxiii. 18. Isaiah xxvi. 3, 8. Lam. iii. 26. Luke xvi. 25. Romans viii. 19–21. Philippians i. 19, 20.

Q. How then should we receive the testimony, which God gives of men and things?

A. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. 1 John v. 9. Jeremiah xlii. 5. John v. 36, 7.

Q. Does not the truth of God lay a firm foundation for the confidence of his creatures?

A. Yes. I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me. Acts xxvii. 25. Psalms cxxv. 1, *ib.* xlii. 11. Romans iv. 20, 21.

REMARKS.

Be certain that you rightly understand the word of God: for his veracity does not require him to fulfil a false expectation.

First. *Do not confound individuals with nations and communities in the application of his*

promises. In Acts vii. 5, it is said that "God gave to Abraham no inheritance in the land of Canaan; no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him and to his seed after him, for a possession." The apparent contradiction between the *facts* and the *promise* of God in this instance, will immediately vanish, if we remember, that the promise was national, and not intended to include every individual member of the family of Abraham. In this sense it was received by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, (Hebrews xi. 13) and in this sense it was literally fulfilled.

SECONDLY. *Do not confound temporal with spiritual things, in the interpretation of God's promises.* The promises relating to the spiritual kingdom of Messiah, the Jews misunderstood to refer to the reign of a temporal Prince, who should subdue the nations with the power of the sword. Hence, they were not prepared for the objects of his advent; and instead of submitting to his spiritual dominion, they filled up the measure of their iniquity in his crucifixion. In like manner, should any infer from such promises as these: "fear not little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," or "the meek shall inherit the earth," that God hath purposed to bestow upon his people a temporal possession of the world, it would imply no want of veracity in the Deity, if they should never realize their expectation. God will fulfil spiritual promises only in spiritual blessings.

Thirdly. *Do not confound appearances with realities in the fulfillment of the divine promises.* In Psalms xci. 10, it is said of God's people, "No evil shall befall thee; neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling:" and in Psalms lxxxiv. 11, "The Lord will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly." But we are not to infer from such expressions, that nothing painful or unpleasant shall befall those who fear God. All things that are agreeable are not profitable: nor are all things to be viewed as evils which may be disagreeable. When Joseph was sold into Egypt, the pious patriarch exclaimed, "All these things go against me." Nevertheless, he lived to see that "God meant it for his good," and for that of his house. Afflictions are always unpleasant, but when we consider the valuable ends that may result from them, they appear among the best marks of the goodness of our heavenly Father. God promises to withhold nothing that is really profitable from his people; and to allow nothing to befall them which is really injurious. This is the sense in which such promises are to be taken.

Fourthly. *Do not lose sight of the characters specified in the divine promises.* "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." In all promises of this description, the character of the

individual referred to, is of essential importance. Should any of a different character expect to receive the promised blessing, they might be disappointed, and yet God be true. A promise to such characters is binding only so far as the character specified is strictly maintained. "The expectation of the wicked shall perish."

FIFTHLY. *Do not confound the certainty of the things promised with the time, place, and manner of their bestowment.* "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me;" and that his word shall be fulfilled in its season." But when that season shall arrive, where we may be at the moment—in what we may be engaged—these are questions, which the Father hath reserved in his own power.

An expectation based upon the divine promise, after carefully remarking these and the like principles—which also apply with equal force to the divine denunciations—will as certainly be realized as that God hath spoken. "For God willing, more abundantly, to shew unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Hebrews vi. 17, 18.

LESSON XIII.

GOD—THE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE OF.

QUESTION. Is not the Lord a righteous and just God?

ANSWER. Yes. Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments. Psalms cxix. 137. Deut. xxxii. 2. Job xxxvii. 23. Pro. xvi. 11. Isaiah xlv. 21. Revelation xv. 3.

Q. You know that the dealings of God with men are exceedingly various, and sometimes afflictive: are any of them unrighteous or unjust?

A. No. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. Psalms cxlv. 17. Ezra ix. 13–15. Psalms lxxxix. 14. Rev. xvi. 7.

Q. The character of individuals may be safely inferred from the things which they love or hate: does not the Lord love righteousness and hate wickedness?

A. Yes. The Lord loveth righteousness and hateth wickedness. Psalms lxv. 7, *ib.* v. 4–6, *ib.* xi. 7.

Q. Has not the Lord commanded us to be just and upright in all our transactions?

A. Yes. God saith, that which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live.—Deut. xvi. 20. Lev. xix. 35. 2 Samuel xxiii. 3. Luke iii. 10–16, Colossians iv. 1.

Q. Has not the Lord forbidden every species of fraud, dishonesty, oppression and injustice?

A. Yes. See that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; for the Lord is the avenger of all such. 1 Thessalonians iv. 6. Deuteronomy xxv. 13–16. Proverbs xi. 1, *ib.* xx. 10–14, *ib.* xxiv. 11, 12, *ib.* xxviii. 8. Isaiah x. 1, 2. Malachi iii. 5. James v. 1–5.

Q. Has not God appointed a day in which he will strictly and *formally* examine into the character and conduct of men?

A. Yes. God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained. Acts xvii. 31. Psalms xcvi. 13, *ib.* xcviii. 9. Matthew xii. 36. Romans ii. 16, *ib.* xiv. 12. 2 Corinthians v. 10. 1 Peter iv. 4, 5.

Q. It is an unrighteous thing to respect the persons of men in judgment: when God comes to judge the world, will he have any respect to persons?

A. No. There is no respect of persons with

God. Rom. ii. 11. Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. x. 17. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Job xxxiv. 12, 19, *ib.* viii. 3. Is. iii. 10, 11.

Q. Will not the Lord in righteousness and justice, give to every man in precise accordance with his works, and the proper effect of his works?

A. Yes. The eyes of the Lord are upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. Jer. xxxii. 19. Job xxxiv. 11. Ps. lxii. 12. Jer. xvii. 10. Mat. xvi. 27. Rev. xx. 12.

Q. Christians sometimes make large sacrifices, and submit to great trials and persecutions for the glory of God: will not the righteous Lord reward them for all these things?

A. Yes. The Lord is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labour of love, which ye have showed to his name. Heb. vi. 10. Mat. v. 10–12, *ib.* x. 40–42. Mark ix, 41. Luke vi. 35, *ib.* xviii. 7, 8. Rom. xii. 19. Rev. vi. 10.

Q. Will not a righteous God punish those who persecute and oppress his people?

A. Yes. It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.

2 Thes. i. 6–9. Mat. xviii. 5. Rev. xviii. 20, *ib.* xix. 2, 3.

REMARKS.

The present life is a period, not of rewards and punishments, but of the distribution of talents to be improved with reference to a future accountability: and, therefore, a full and complete display of the divine justice cannot be anticipated in the present life. The only caution necessary is, that we do not impugn the justice of God, in what, to us, may now be mysterious, or even apparently unequal in the condition and circumstances of the various nations and individuals of our race. If we are asked why some are born heathen and others Christian—why some are born masters, with every facility for mental and moral improvement; and others are born slaves, to whom these are to a large extent denied—why some are poor, and others rich—why the whole life of some is but a scene of adversity, while others enjoy uninterrupted prosperity? It must be acknowledged, that the only reason that can be assigned is, that "thus it seemeth good in thy sight, O Most High." But surely no one can from hence infer that the whole course of the divine providence is unjust. Is it unjust that the potter should make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Is it unjust that a master should entrust to one servant ten talents, and to another two, and to a third but one? Is it unjust that a man should do what he choses with his own?

Certainly chastened piety would suggest, that ere we presume to sit in judgment upon the ways of God to man, we should patiently wait until the day of retribution, and witness how strictly each man's accountability will be proportioned to his respective talents, and how strictly rewards and punishments will be proportioned to the degree of fidelity with which every man has improved the talents entrusted to him. Nevertheless, we remark,

First. *The divine justice will require more at the hands of some men than of others.* The transactions of the judgment will proceed upon the principles of proportions. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." The wealth, the intelligence, the personal or family influence, the opportunities and occasions, which men enjoy—these, and the like advantages, constitute the talents for which they will be held accountable; and by how much these differ among men, by so much, will the judgment be more tolerable for some than for others.

Secondly. *The divine justice will have respect to every individual action of life.* As in human judicatories, the several charges are preferred separately; so in the great assize of the world, "*every work with every secret thing*," will be brought into judgment. A solitary cup of cold water, "given to a disciple in the name of a disciple," shall not lose its reward: nor shall a solitary instance of the rejection of a disciple, as such, fail of a just retribution.

THIRDLY. *The divine justice will take special cognizance of the motives with which the works of men are performed.* These form an indispensable part of the actions themselves. A good motive, to be sure, will not sanctify a bad deed. Much less will a good deed excuse a bad motive. God saith, "*I the Lord search the heart and try the reins.* even to give to every man according to his works." Pious conduct performed from selfish considerations, or to be seen of men," will "receive no reward of your Father which is in Heaven."

FOURTHLY. *The divine justice will regard, not only the works of men, but also the legitimate effects of those works.* "He will give to every man according to his works, and *according to the fruit of his doings.*" "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars in the firmament forever": and they that are "correpters"—they who "pervert the right ways of the Lord"—who "take away the keys of knowledge, and will neither enter the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer those who would, to enter in—these shall receive the greater damnation."

FIFTHLY. *The divine justice will distribute rewards and punishment, not according to the length of time consumed in the commission of the act, but according to the moral quality of the act, whether good or bad.* It is not material whether the act of obedience or disobedience required an hour, a month or a day; or whether it was done in the twinkling of an eye. The act, and the act alone,

is the question. If it was good, it will be rewarded; if it was evil, it will be condemned. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

FINALLY. *The rigour of the divine justice will be strictly executed upon every one, who has not a personal and saving interest in Christ.* Possessed only of the righteousness of works, they must stand or fall upon this. If under the scrutiny of a burning justice, they can be cleared, that justice will acquit them; if not, they must fall: and the scripture saith, "cursed is every one that *continueth* not in *all things* written in the book of the law to do them."

LESSON XIV.

GOD—THE BENEVOLENCE OF.

QUESTION. You said in the last lesson that the Lord is a just and righteous God; is he not also a God of love and goodness?

ANSWER. Yes. God is love—he is good and doeth good. 1 John iv. 8, 16. Psalms cxix. 68. Nehemiah ix. 17. Psalms xxxiv. 8. Matthew xix. 17.

Q. If you reflect for a moment, you will see, that God has made all living things with capacity for a high degree of enjoyment, and that he has provided them with abundant means of happiness; have we not, therefore, a great many evidences of the goodness of God in creation and providence?

A. Yes. The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Psalms xxxiii. 5. Job xxii. 17, 18. Psalms ciii. 2–6, *ib.* civ. 28. Jeremiah ix. 24. Acts xiv. 17. 1 Timothy iv. 4.

Q. Men are sinful beings, and are prone to abuse their best blessings to their injury; and to prevent this God does sometimes take away their comforts; are not even the afflictions of life a strong mark of God's love towards us?

A. Yes. For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. Proverbs iii. 12. Genesis l. 20. Job v. 17. Psalms cxix. 67, 71. Romans v. 3–5, *ib.* viii. 28. 1 Corinthians xi. 32. Hebrews xii. 6–11.

Q. Is not the gift of Jesus Christ a striking example of the great love of God towards us?

A. Yes. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that he sent his son into

the world, that we might live through him.—1 John iv. 9. 10. *ib.* iii. 16. Romans v. 8. John iii. 16. Ephesians ii. 4–7.

Q. Should not men love and praise God for his great goodness towards them?

A. Yes. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Psalms cvii. 8, *ib.* xxxvi. 7–9, *ib.* cxvi. 12, *ib.* cxvii. 1, 2, *ib.* cxxxviii. 2. 1 John iv. 19.

Q. Has not God commanded us to love our fellow men, even as he has loved us?

A. Yes. If God hath so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 1 John iv. 11, *ib.* iii. 10, *ib.* iv. 7, 20, 21. Luke vi. 35. Romans xiii. 8. 1 Corinthians xiii. 1–3. Ephesians iv. 32, *ib.* v. 25.

REMARKS.

First. *Benevolence denotes either the disposition to do good, or the actual doing of good.* Both of these are ascribed to the Deity, in that beautiful expression of the Psalmist: "The Lord is good and doeth good." We, however, incline to regard the apostolic phrase—"God is love"—as more comprehensive; and, therefore, more applicable to that general view of the divine benevolence to which we allude in the present lesson. The apostle in this place, perhaps, refers, not so

much to any one distinct attribute of Deity, as to a peculiar characteristic of benevolence appertaining to all his perfections and perceivable in all his works. As in the moral law all the duties of social life—whether they respect equals or unequals—whether they concern the guilty or the innocent, are fulfilled in love: so in the divine benevolence, mercy and justice, truth and righteousness, goodness and severity, are perfectly harmonized. God is equally good when he condemns the guilty, or clears the innocent,—when he rewards the virtuous, or punishes the vicious —when he saves the righteous or destroys the wicked. Hence,

SECONDLY. *The divine benevolence is concerned to secure the highest good of the universe, as a whole.* Every society is made up of individuals. Nevertheless, it is easily perceived, that the society, as such, is widely distinguished from the individuals of which it is composed. Nor yet is it less apparent, that the highest good of the body, which is always the preferable object, may sometimes require the sacrifice of some of its members. Numberless instances of this are recorded in the annals of families, churches and States:— nor is it possible to calculate the injury that would result to the world, if the contrary principle were to obtain. No man would consider that father a benevolent being, who should suffer the peace and happiness of his whole house broken up, rather than eject an incorrigible son. No man would consider that ruler a benevolent be-

ing, who, in an over-weening fondness for an outlaw, should sacrifice the order and well-being of the whole community. The innocent have claims upon benevolence, as well as the guilty; and no good being could adopt the policy of hazarding the former for the sake of the latter.—This principle holds good equally in the divine, as in human government. The benevolence of God is directed to the attainment of the highest interests of a boundless creation: nor is it an argument against that benevolence, that he should punish the incorrigibly wicked with "everlasting destruction from his presence and from the glory of his power."

THIRDLY. *So far as relates to the present life, the benevolence of God is of two kinds: that which respects the guilty, and that which respects the innocent.* The former is properly pity, mercy, or compassion: the latter, is complacency or delight. To the former, allusion is had in that vast and sublime system of providence and grace which is directed to the salvation of sinners.—"God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The latter is meant, when it is said, "the righteous Lord loveth righteousness." It were impossible that a pure and holy being should feel delight in sinners, as such; and it were equally impossible that he should not contemplate holiness with complacency.

LESSON XV.

GOD—THE MERCY OF.

QUESTION. Mercy consists in doing good to an unworthy object; and that without any hope of reward: is not the Lord a merciful God?

ANSWER. Yes. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.—Psalms ciii. 8. Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 9. Micah vii. 18. Ephesians ii. 4.

Q. Can you mention any of the blessings which God bestows upon men?

A. Yes. He forgiveth all thine iniquities; healeth all thy diseases; redeemeth thy life from destruction; crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; and satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles. Psalms ciii. 2–5, *ib.* v. 12, *ib.* xxiii. 5–6, *ib.* lvi. 13, *ib.* cxlvii. 3. Hebrews x. 17.

Q. Does God confer these blessings upon mankind because they are worthy of them?

A. No. O Lord, I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou

hast shewed unto thy servant. Genesis xxxii. 10. Daniel ix. 7, 8. Matthew viii. 8. Romans iii. 9–18, 23.

Q. You said in the last lesson, that the gift of Jesus Christ to die for sinners, is an instance of the benevolence of God: is not the mercy of God also displayed in the salvation of sinners by him?

A. Yes. After that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Titus iii. 4, 5. Rom. iii. 3, 24, 5. Eph. ii. 8.

Q. If one does you wrong, and you inflict upon him a less punishment than his offence deserves, you manifest more of mercy than justice in the act: is not the *mercy* of God in this manner displayed, even in the heaviest afflictions of life?

A. Yes. For God hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve. Ezra ix. 13. Job xi. 6. Psalms ciii. 10.

Q. Is not the long suffering and patience of God, giving to men time and opportunity to repent, an evidence of his great mercy towards them?

A. Yes. It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. Lam. iii 22. Isaiah xxx. 18. Joel ii. 12, 13. 2 Peter iii. 9.

Q. Will men ever be able to repay the Lord for all his goodness and mercy towards them?

A. No. O Lord my goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight. Ps. xvi. 23. Job xxii, 2, *ib.* xxxv. 5–8. Prov. ix. 12. Acts xvii. 25.

Q. Doth not the Lord require us to be merciful to our fellow creatures, even as he is merciful to us?

A. Yes. Be ye therefore merciful even as your Father which is in heaven is merciful.—Luke vi. 36. Psalms xviii. 25. Proverbs iii. 3. Hosea vi. 6. Micah vi 8. Zech. xii. 9. Mat. v. 7.

Q. Will not a good man be merciful even to his brute?

A. Yes. A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast. Proverbs xii. 10.

Q. What is said of the unmerciful?

A. He shall have judgment without mercy, that showeth no mercy. James ii. 13. Hosea iv. i. Matthew xxiii. 23.

First. *Mercy is the mildest and tenderest form of the divine goodness; and necessarily implies the existence of natural and moral evil.* For aught that now appears, justice, truth and benevolence might exist, and be displayed in a clear and imposing manner in a government where vice and misery had no existence. It were otherwise, however, with regard to mercy. Here sin and wretchedness are indispensable. We can hardly consider it possible to predicate unworthiness of those who have never sinned: much less, that unworthiness should exist to such a degree, as that a holy God should forsake the creatures of his own power without sin. The commission of crime is the only forfeiture of his paternal goodness: and but for this, there had been no room for mercy in the universe. This fact is infinitely worthy of the serious consideration of those who esteem mercy as "the darling attribute of God;" and yet are, ever and anon, finding fault with that divine providence by which sin found admission into our world.

Secondly. *In strict propriety, mercy appertains only to probationary existence.* This is evident, partly from its own nature, which is remedial; and partly from the scriptures, wherein we are taught that a period of justice will eventually succeed to those who obstinately persist in rebellion against the divine government. Its legitimate province is this world alone. Now it stands the embodiment of all that is good, and, by a thousand moving considerations, entreats fallen

man to be reconciled to God. It points to the gathering terrors of Sinai, and to the streaming tenderness of Calvary—to the flames of the pit, and to the raptures of heaven; and by all these asks, "why will ye die?" But soon the voice of mercy will be hushed. The vital spark blown out, and she comes to man no more. They who have slighted her overtures, will never again slight them: and they who have hearkened to her invitations—clothed in the spotless and worthy righteousness of Christ—will be forever regarded as though they had not sinned. Then will the prophecy be fulfilled in its widest application upon the incorrigible—"this is a people of no understanding: therefore, he that made them will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will show them no favor. Then, also, *in its tendencies and effects*, it will be seen that "the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, *upon them that fear him.*"

THIRDLY. The divine mercy should be harmonized with all the divine perfections.

"*God is a spirit.*" His mercy is not that mechanical emotion—that inordinate excitement and writhing of the muscular and nervous system in man, which is occasioned by the sight of distressed objects. He has no parts and organs to be pained and rent by the shrieks and moans of the damned—no nerves and fibres to be stretched and lacerated by the cries and wailings of the lost. His mercy is an intelligence which sees what should be pitied; and compassionates what har-

mony and order require that he should compassionate.

God is holy. His mercy is not that weakness that declines from righteousness—that weakness which disposes the magistrate to release the criminal—the sparing of whose life will occasion a thousand tragical deaths. It regards the well-being of the innocent and the oppressed, not less than the happiness of the guilty and the oppressor. It were absurd that a holy God should pardon the impenitent, and restore him to his communion—whose release were but a farther opportunity to magnify his crime.

God is supremely happy. His mercy is not influenced by those sordid considerations of advantage which prompt the kindness of men. "Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? If thou sinnest, what dost thou unto him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou against him? If thou be righteous what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?" The origin and fountain—the cause and reason of his mercy, is himself alone. "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and he hath compassion on whom he will have compassion."

LESSON XVI.

GOD—THE HOLINESS OF.

QUESTION. You said in the last four lessons, that the Lord is a God of truth, of justice, of benevolence and mercy: is he not then a holy God? the law of God?

ANSWER. Yes. The Lord our God is holy Psalms xcix. 9, *ib.* xxii. 3. Leviticus xix. 2 Joshua xxiv. 19. Isaiah vi. 3.

Q. Will the Lord do any thing that is wicked?

A. No. Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. Job xxxiv. 10, *ib.* xxxvi. 23, Deut. xxxii. 4. Psalms xcii. 15, *ib.* cxiv. 17. Romans ix. 14.

Q. You judge of the moral character of the people by the laws they make: what is said of the law of God?

A. The law is holy; and the commandment holy, just, and good. Romans vii. 12. Psalms xix. 7–9, *ib.* cv. 42. Jer. vii. 8–11. Rom. i. 2.

Q. Doth not God require all of his creatures to be holy?

A. Yes. As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Pet. i. 15. Leviticus xi. 44. Psalms xxix. 2. Eccl. v. 2. Isaiah i. 16–18. Luke i. 74, 75. 2 Corinthians vii. 1. 1 Thessalonians iv. 4–7. Hebrews xii. 14. 2 Peter iii. 11.

Q. It is an evidence that one is holy in a high degree, when he will neither entice others to do wrong, nor be enticed to do wrong himself: is not the holiness of God manifested in this way?

A. Yes. For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. James i. 13. Deuteronomy x. 17. 2 Chronicles xix. 7.

Q. It is a mark of the unholiness of men, that they are sometimes amused with, and find a degree of pleasure, in the wickedness of others:—does God, in like manner, take any pleasure in sin?

A. No. He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him. Psalms v. 4–6, *ib.* xi. 7, *ib.* xxxiii. 5. Proverbs xv. 9, 26. Jeremiah xliv. 4. Hab. i. 13.

Q. Since, then, God cannot be enticed to do wickedly himself, nor will entice others to do so; and since he requires all his creatures to be holy, and feels no pleasure in their wickedness, must he not be infinitely holy?

A. Yes. The Lord is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Exodus xv. 11. 1 Samuel ii. 2. Job iv. 17–19. *ib.* xv. 14–16, *ib.* xxv. 4–6. Psalms lxxxix. 6–8.

REMARKS.

First. *The holiness of God is inherent.* Holiness enters essentially into the divine nature, as yellowness in gold, or light in the rays of the sun: so that, we may as easily imagine that God is not, as that he is not holy. If this be not true, it must be either because unholiness is preferable to holiness; or because, notwithstanding holiness is preferable to unholiness, God cannot be holy. Neither of these can be supposed. No intelligent being can contemplate the one, and the other, without feeling that holiness is preferable to unholiness: nor yet, can he rightly understand the divine character and circumstances, without feeling that he is infinitely independent of, and infinitely removed from, all those influences that occasion wickedness. "Possessing all things, he can need nothing; contriving all things, he can fear nothing; and effecting all things which he chooses, with infinite ease, he can have no occasion to be otherwise than perfectly holy.

Secondly. *The holiness of God is infinite in all its parts and degrees.* With him no perfection is wanting; nor is any excellence possessed, in an imperfect or irregular manner. In his holiness every possible virtue is combined, blended,

and harmonized, as the prismatic colors in the sunbeams. No one is less essential; nor is any one more "darling." "Mercy and truth here meet together;" and here, "righteousness and peace" embrace each other. The stern rigor of justice, and the melting tenderness of pity, here, mingle and associate with fraternal intimacy. Holiness is not so much a solitary attribute of the Deity, as it is the harmony of *all* his attributes—as it is the crowning glory of the whole.

THIRDLY. *The holiness of God is active.* It consists in conforming his conduct to the various relations he sustains to the universe—as Sovereign, Lord, Creator, Preserver Redeemer, Lawgiver and Judge. Whatever *right reason* requires that he should do in these several relations, his hand performs without abatement, without error, and without mistake. Himself, the fountain of all being, of all order, and of all harmony, it were impossible that he should not distinctly understand all the relations and dependencies of beings; and impossible that he should not infinitely delight in fulfilling to every one, that which order and harmony require him to do. He is holy in his word and in his works; in his blessings and in his curses; in the pardons he extends, and in the punishments he inflicts. "Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity."

FOURTHLY. *The holiness of God renders him an object infinitely worthy the supreme admiration and delight, the love and confidence of his crea-*

tures. The eye of man was organized to admire beauty; and the soul to delight in excellence: and if the fatal and disorganizing work of sin has not extended so far as to entirely eradicate every vestige of the original purity and uprightness of our nature, we may well be allowed, on the present occasion, to make an appeal to that which remains. Where are those who love the truth for its own sake; and find pleasure in holiness because it is such? Where are the disputers of man's total apostacy and alienation from the life of God? To these we appeal—to these we present "the full-orbed glory" of the divine perfection, "with all its round of rays complete." In him, alone, unite all the virtues that adorn character, and render it infinitely lovely and worthy of praise. He alone is light, in whom there is no darkness. To him we point, and claim the homage of every rational and intelligent creature, upon grounds which reason will approve. "Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool: for the Lord our God is holy." Psalms xcix. 5, 9.

LESSON XVII.

THE TRINITY.

QUESTION, You said in the sixth lesson, that there is but one God: is not that one God manifested to us in three persons?

ANSWER. Yes. There are three that bear record in Heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 1 John v. 7. John i. 18, *ib.* x. 30, *ib.* xiv. 20.

Q. Will you repeat Matthew iii. 16, 17?

A. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him; and the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Q. Were there not three persons manifested on this occasion?

A. Yes. The Son, who was baptized; the Holy Ghost, who descended upon him; and the Father, who said this is is my beloved Son.

Q. In baptism we openly profess our dependence upon, and our submission to, the person in whose name we are baptized: what is the command of Christ respecting baptism?

A. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Mathew xxviii. 19.

Q. Do we not, then, in baptism profess our dependence upon, and our submission to, three divine persons equally?

A. Yes. We depend, equally, upon the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and we worship them in the same manner.

Q. A benediction is a form of short prayer for blessings, which none but God can bestow: will you repeat the apostle's benediction in 2 Corinthians xiii. 14?

A. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. [See also Romans i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 3. Gal. i. 3. Eph. i. 2. Philippians i. 2, *ib.* ii. 1. Romans xv. 5, 6. 2 Thes. iii. 5.]

Q. Did not the apostle in this place address his prayer, equally, to three divine persons?

A. Yes. He asked blessings from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Q. Since, then, there are three that bear record in Heaven, and since three were manifested at the baptism of Christ; and since we are to be baptized equally in the name of three; and since the apostle prayed to three in his benedictions: is it not absolutely certain that there are three persons in the Godhead, and that these three are one God?

A. Yes. There are three persons in the one God, and no more than three.

REMARKS.

First. *The word "person," must not be understood in the same sense when applied to God, as when applied to men.* An oversight of a proper distinction at this point, has been the occasion of much error, and much needless controversy, respecting the blessed trinity. When applied to men, "person" denotes an individual being: and every "person" is a distinct and separate being. This, however, is not true with regard to the deity. There are not three *beings* in the Godhead; but *one being*, in *three persons*. Furthermore, when applied to men, the word "person" includes in it only such attributes as belong to men; but when referred to the deity, it includes all the attributes that properly belong to God: viz: "Power and might irresistible; perfect knowledge and consummate wisdom; eternity, immutability and omnipresence; creative powers, supremacy and necessary existence. These are

the characters, under which God has been pleased to make himself known; and it is on these accounts, that he, in opposition to all other gods, claims to be received and honored as God. These, therefore, are what make up the spiritual idea of a 'person,' that is properly, really, and truly God."

SECONDLY. *The trinity in unity is a great mystery, which we are required, not so much to understand, as to believe.* How three are one, and how one is three, we may not be able to fully comprehend: nevertheless, we are able to believe it upon the ground of evidence. And thus, we are compelled to act in a great many instances besides the present. "Thou knowest not the way of the spirit; nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her, that is with child:" (Ecclesiastes li. 5) how much less can we know of the peculiar manner in which God may exist! What God is, no man could find out, until by a distinct revelation he saw fit to make it plain: and in like manner, we should be content to wait, until by a revelation he shall see fit to show us how there can be three persons in one God, and one God in three persons. If this doctrine is clearly taught in the sacred scriptures, it is our highest wisdom to receive it, asking no questions, as to "how can these things be."

THIRDLY. As additional evidence of this doctrine, we observe, that divine titles, divine attributes, divine works, and divine worship, are in the scriptures given equally to three persons. Our limits will not allow us to quote the proofs at length; but for the satisfaction of those who

wish to examine the subject, we will state them —arranged under the word Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and in a separate column, to the left, the various points proven by the scripture references:

(1) *Divine titles are given equally to three persons: to the*

	FATHER.	SON.	HOLY GHOST.
LORD, or JEHOVAH,	Deut. x. 17.	Acts x. 36. 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15.	Nu. xiv. 26–9. Heb. iii. 7.
GOD,	Deut. vii. 9.	1 Tim. iii. 16. 1 John v. 20.	Acts v. 34. 1 Thes. v. 23.

(2) *Divine attributes are predicated equally of three persons—of the*

	FATHER.	SON.	HOLY GHOST.
ETERNITY,	Ps. xc. 2.	Mic. v. 2. Rev. i. 8.	Heb. ix. 14.
OMNIPRESENCE,	Jer. xxiii. 24.	Mat. xviii. 20. John iii. 13.	Ps. cxxxix. 7.
OMNISCIENCE,	Acts xv. 18.	John x. 15. Col. ii. 2, 3.	1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.
IMMUTABILITY,	Mal. iii. 6.	Heb. i. 10, 12. *Ib.* xiii. 8.	Jer. xxxi. 36. Heb. x. 15, 16.
OMNIPOTENCE,	Job xlii. 1, 2	Phil. iii. 20, 21.	Ro. xv. 13, 19.

(3) *Divine words are ascribed equally to three persons —to the*

	FATHER.	SON.	HOLY GHOST.
CREATION,	Jer. x. 10, 12.	John i. 1–3. Col. i. 13, 17.	Gen. i. 2. Job xxvi. 13.
INSP'ATION,	Job. xxxii. 8.	Gal. i. 12.	John xvi. 13, 14.
SANCTIFI'N,	Jude i.	Heb. ii. 11.	Rom. xv. 16.
RESURREC'N	John v. 21.	John v. 28, 29	1 Pet. iii. 18. Rom. i. 4. *Ib.* viii. 11.

(4) *Divine worship is rendered equally to three persons —to the*

	FATHER,	SON.	HOLY GHOST.
PRAYER AND PRAISE.	Ps. xcv. 6. 7.	Heb. i. 6.	Rom. xv. 5, 6. 2 Thes. 3, 5.

But we forbear: we are persuaded, that the evidence cited in this table of proof, is sufficient to convince an impartial inquirer after truth; and beyond this, there is no hope of conviction. If, after a careful examination of this accumulation of testimony, any should still be disposed to doubt, we would ask, which of the three persons shall we reject? Are not precisely the same things said of all, that are said of either? and may we not as readily deny the existence of God, *in toto*, as to deny that there are three persons, equally divine—"coequal, coeternal, and coessential," in the Godhead?

We, therefore, enter it as a part of Christian faith, that "there is one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker, and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible: and in the unity of this Godhead, there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Son, who is the word of the Father, and begotten from everlasting of the Father, is the true and eternal God, of one substance with the Father. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son—the true and eternal God." "There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

PART II.

LESSON XVIII.

CREATION—THE WORLD.

QUESTION. Who made the heavens and the earth?

ANSWER. In the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth? Genesis i. 1. Isaiah xliv. 24. Jeremiah x. 12.

Q. Is there any thing, besides himself, in Heaven or in earth, which God did not make?

A. No. All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made, that was made. John i. 3. Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 2, *ib.* iii. 4.

Q. By what means did God make all things?

A. He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. Psalms xxxiii. 9, *ib.* cxlviii. 4, 5. 2 Peter iii. 5.

Q. Did God simply fashion the worlds out of something that existed before; or did he create them out of nothing?

A. Through faith we understand, that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear. Hebrews xi. 3. "*He created to make.*" Genesis ii. 3 (*margin*).

Q. How long was God employed in the creation of all things?

A. In six days God made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is. Exodus xx. 11, *ib.* xxxi. 17. Genesis i. 31.

Q. Could not the great power of God have made all things in one day, as easily as in six days?

A. Yes. God could have made all things by one word, as easily as he made them in six days. Gen. xviii. 14. Jer. xxxii. 27. Mat. xix. 26.

Q. Why then did God employ six days in the creation of all things?

A. To teach us, that we should labor and do all our work in six days, and rest every seventh day. Exodus xx. 9–11, *ib.* xxiii. 12, *ib.* xxxi. 15.

Q. What did God make on the first day?

A. God said, Let there be light, and there was

light. And God saw the light that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light *day*, and the darkness he called *night:* and the evening and the morning were the first day. Genesis i. 3–5.

Q. What was the work of the sixth day?

A. On the sixth day, God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them. Gen. i. 27, 31. Job x. 8–11. Ps. cxxxix. 14–16. Acts xvii. 20.

Q. What did God say concerning his works, after he had finished them?

A. God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. Genesis i. 31.

Q. Can you tell what the Lord did on the seventh day?

A. Yes. On the seventh day, God ended his work, which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made. Genesis ii. 2.

Q. Was God wearied with creating the world, that he should need rest?

A. No. The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. Isaiah xl. 28.

Q. What, then, is meant by God's resting from his work?

A. God *ceased* from the work of creating. Hebrews iv. 10.

Q. For what purpose did God create the heavens and the earth, man, and all things else?

A. Thou, O Lord, hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Revelation iv. 11. Psalms xix. 1, *ib.* cxlv. 10–12. Romans i. 19, 20.

REMARKS.

This world is but a small part of the boundless universe. Nevertheless, it is that part with which we are principally conversant; and with which we have most to do: and we remark,

First. *The world has not existed from eternity.* This is evident from the present state of the arts and sciences; and from the present surface of the globe; and from the absurdities which that supposition would involve.

(1) *The present state of the arts and sciences.* It is a fact familiar to all, that discoveries and improvements are being continually made, in every department of the arts and sciences. It is also a fact, not less notorious, that almost the entire amount of discovery and improvement in these, has been made within the last three thousand years. But what is three thousand years beside eternity? It is "not a drop in the bucket"—not a speck in the horizon. If, then, the world has existed from eternity, it is absolutely incredible,

that the arts and sciences have attained only their present degree of improvement, and that this has been done within a period so short.

(2) *The present surface of the globe.* It is known to every observing person, that the hills and mountains are continually washing down; and that the valleys are continually being filled up. There are within our own knowledge, and which even our boyhood did not fail to remark, multitudinous places, where once the bogs and morasses defied the foot of man or beast; but which, in less than half a century, have been so completely filled by the rapid descent of earth from the surrounding elevations as now to present an inviting prospect to the industrious husbandman. This tendency to a level is apparent in all parts of the world. If then, the world has existed from eternity, it is incredible, that it has not long since been reduced to a perfect level.

(3) *The eternity of the world involves the most glaring absurdities.* Upon that supposition, there must have been an infinite series of years, of men, of trees, and of every other species of existence. But as the word "*infinite*," means without beginning or end; an "*infinite series*" of any thing, is a contradiction in terms. A "series," whether great or small, is an addition of units: and as each unit, or link in the chain, had a beginning, the whole must have had a beginning, also. Were we, however, to grant, that the *first* link in the series (of years for example) had no beginning, but existed coeval with eternity itself;

still, it must be allowed, that the *second* year had a beginning: and, as there are only three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, the commencement of the second year could have been only this number of days from the commencement of the first. But it were an absurdity that no sensible person would presume to assert, that this number of days prefixed to a definite and limited period, would make an indefinite and unlimited period.

Secondly. *The creation of the world is ascribed equally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.* If the world and all things have not existed from eternity, they must have been created. That which had no existence itself, could neither create itself, nor any thing else. Nor could a universe containing so many marks of contrivance and design as are to be seen in every thing around us, within us and above us, have come into existence by chance. The cause must be adequate to the effect. Contrivance and design are evidences of wisdom and skill: and the bringing into existence a universe so immeasurably vast, as we know that to be which surrounds us, replete with instances of design and contrivance, literally without number, is an effect, which required an exertion of wisdom and power absolutely infinite. "He that built all things is God" —God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the

Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made: and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created." "The spirit of God hath made me." "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Gen. i. 1, 2. Job xxxiii. 4, Ps. civ. 30, John i. 1–14.

THIRDLY. *If God created all things, he has the most perfect and absolute right to all things, and the most sovereign authority over all things.* No right can be equal to that which creation gives. *We* enter God's "husbandry," and "cull the ripe fruits" of his almighty power and call them our own! *We* boast of our right to do what we please with the products of his hand! *We* sharply contend for an exclusive possession! *We* deny, even to the deity, what he himself hath made! But what rights have we, that we should speak stoutly with our lips? "His hand hath made us, and not we ourselves." What claim have we to this life, that we should abuse it? What exclusive inheritance have we in this wealth that we should squander it upon luxury and wine? "The gold and the silver are his." What authority have we over our fellow creatures, that we should maltreat them? "The cattle upon a thousand hills are his, also." Who are we, that

we should murmur and complain at his providences? "Hath he not the right to do what he will with his own? Shall the child contend with his parent? Shall the servant "gainsay" his master? "Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

LESSON XIX.

CREATION—ANGELS.

QUESTION. Of how many orders of intelligent creatures have we any account?

ANSWER. There are two classes of intelligent creatures—angels and men.

Q. What are angels?

A. Angels are created and finite spirits. Ps. civ. 4. Heb. i. 7.

Q. Are there many of those created spirits?

A. Yes. There is an innumerable company of angels. Heb. xii. 22. Psalms lxviii. 17. Daniel vii. 10. Revelation v. 11.

Q. In the Scriptures, names are often expressive of character and employment: by what names are the angels called, which describe their character and offices?

A. Angels are called, Authorities, Principalities, Mights, Powers, Thrones, Dominions, Cherubims and Seraphims. 1 Peter iii. 22. Eph. i. 21. Col. i. 16. Gen. iii. 24. Ps. lxxx. 1. Is. vi. 2, 3.

Q. Can you mention any instance of the great power of an angel in the destruction of God's enemies?

A. Yes. The angel of the Lord went forth, and in one night, smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and eighty-five thousand men. Isaiah xxxvii. 36. 2 Samuel xxiv. 15 16. Rev. vii. 1, *ib.* 8th chapter, *ib.* xx. 1–3.

Q. Are these mighty and strong angels ever interested for the protection of God's people?

A. Yes. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Ps. xxxiv. 7, *ib.* xci. 11, 12. Gen. xix. 15, 16, *ib.* xxviii. 12. 2 Kings vi. 17. Dan. vi. 22. Hebrews i. 14. Revelation vii. 2, 3.

REMARKS.

Of the existence, nature, attributes and employments of angels, we have no other account, than

that which is afforded in the sacred oracles. Nevertheless,

First. *There is nothing absurd in the supposition that angels should exist, and that they should exist under circumstances precisely such, as the Scriptures represent.* That men exist, and that they exist compounded of matter and mind—compounded of a rational soul, and an irrational body—is beyond a doubt. But, abstractly considered, there is less reason to doubt the existence of angels, than the existence of men. God is a pure spirit: and to a rational being wholly unacquainted with the existence of either men or angels, we dare assert, it would seem far more likely, that, in creating intelligent beings, he would create them purely spiritual than that he would create them partly spiritual, and partly bodily. We think it highly improbable, that it would ever have occurred to the thoughts of any being, entirely ignorant of the fact, that in the creation of intelligent beings, God would blend matter and mind into one compound existence: but, on the contrary, it is in the highest sense supposable, that delighting as he does in his own manner of existence, he would create intelligent beings as much like himself as the nature of the case would allow. If, therefore, our own consciousness demonstrates the less probability—the existence of men, to be true; it certainly affords a strong presumption, that the greater probability—the existence of angels—is also true.

Secondly. *If angels are allowed to exist,*

there is nothing absurd in the supposition, that they feel a deep interest in the affairs of men. In all times and places, men feel a deep interest in the affairs of each other. The good weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who do rejoice. The bad envy the happiness of the good, and delight in the misery they suffer. This interest, in a much higher and holier degree, is felt and manifested by the Deity. He has shown in a great multiplicity of ways that he beholds all the intelligences of the universe, not with an idle indifference; but with the liveliest concern. If, then, we may reason from what we know, it would seem altogether improbable, that one intelligent being could exist under any circumstances, where he would feel entirely uninterested, in the condition and conduct of other intelligences within his knowledge.

THIRDLY. *Nor is there any thing absurd in the supposition, that angels should manifest the interest they feel in the affairs of men,* by *laboring to influence their conduct, to the utmost of their powers and privileges.* Thus we know the divine being acts: and thus *we* act. We traverse earth and sea to make one proselyte to our opinions and practices. So far as we are holy, we labor to make others holy: and so far as we are unholy, we labour to make others unholy: Were it in our power to transcend the limits of this earth, our zeal would doubtless be carried into the planetary system; and our own peculiar character would be infused into the inhabitants of

other worlds besides our own. For aught that now appears, it is a condition of intelligence, like the sun to diffuse itself abroad; and of vice, like the leaven, to leaven the whole lump. Nor is any thing detracted from this supposition by the fact, that we are wholly ignorant of the mode of angelic existence; and of the method by which they exert their influence over other beings. The same is true also of the divine being: and ignorance would prove as much in the latter case, as in the former.

Fourthly. *That which reason renders thus probable, with regard to angels, the Scriptures reduce to infallible certainty.* Here every shadow of doubt is taken away. In a great number of places, and in a great variety of ways, this authority asserts their being, their nature, their endowments, and their influences. It represents their numbers as immense, their attributes as truly wonderful, and their stations, offices and employments as vastly important and interesting. Their titles are expressive of their exalted characters, and essential duties. They are endowed with extraordinary faculties, invested with extraordinary authority, and fulfill extraordinary purposes. The angels are the prime ministers of God's government. They stand in the presence of the King of kings, receive his commands, and execute his pleasure upon all the provinces of his illimitable empire. Possessed of power, wisdom and activity, absolutely astonishing, they are represented as holding the four winds of Heaven in

their hands, as distinguishing the real worshippers of God from those who are not, and as passing with a rapidity that exceeds imagination itself, to perform the will of their universal sovereign.

LESSON XX.

ANGELS—THE FALL OF.

QUESTION. The angels were created holy and happy: have they all remained holy?

ANSWER. No. God charged some of his angels with folly. Job iv. 18, *ib.* xv. 15. John viii. 44. 1 John iii. 8.

Q. What was the crime of the angels, for which God thus charged them with folly?

A. The angels sinned, in that they kept not their first estate, (or principality) but left their own habitation, through pride. Jude vi. 1 Tim. iii. 6.

Q. Were many of the angels involved in this sin?

A. Yes. The name of the fallen angels is *legion*, for they are many. Mark v. 9. Luke viii. 30.

Q. What did God do unto the angels that sinned?

A. God spared not the angels that sinned; but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto the judgment. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Luke x. 18. Jude vi. Rev. xii. 9, 12, *ib.* xx. 1–3.

Q. By what name is the chief of the fallen angels called in Scripture?

A. The fallen angels have a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue, is Abaddon; but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon: he is also called the Devil and Satan. Rev. ix. 11, *ib.* xii. 10. Mathew xii. 24. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Eph. ii. 2, *ib.* vi. 11, 12.

Q. The word "Devil," properly signifies an accuser or slanderer; and the word, Apollyon, means a destroyer: do the Scriptures represent Satan as having the disposition of a liar and murderer?

A. Yes. The Devil is a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it. John viii. 44. Gen. iii. 4. Job i. 9–11. Zech. iii. 1. Rev. xii. 9, 10.

Q. Do these fallen and wicked spirits, in any wise ever interfere with the piety and happiness of men?

A. Yes. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter v. 8. Job i. 6, 7. Mathew xiii. 25, 39. Luke xxii. 31. Revelation xii. 12.

Q. In what way do the Devil and his angels promote the destruction of men?

A. The Devil occasions the destruction of men by tempting them to do wickedly, and by preventing them from doing well.

Q. Can you mention any instance in which the Devil ever influenced men to do wickedly?

A. Yes. He beguiled Eve to eat the forbidden fruit—he put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray the Lord Jesus—and he filled the heart of Annanias to lie unto the Holy Ghost. Gen. iii. 4. 2 Cor. xi. 3. John xiii. 2. Acts v. 3.

Q. How does the Devil prevent any from doing well?

A. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the word out of his heart, lest he should believe and be saved. Luke viii. 12. Mat. xiii. 19. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

Q. Could those wicked spirits compel men to sin, if they did not voluntarily yield to temptation?

A. No. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you. James iv. 7. Luke x. 17. Rom. xvi. 20. 1 John ii. 14, *ib.* v. 18. Eph. vi, 11–16.

Q. Do not the Scriptures represent all sinners as having the disposition, and being under the influence of the wicked one?

A. Yes. He that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. 1 John iii. 8, 12. John viii. 44. Acts xiii. 10. Ephesians ii. 2.

Q. If, then, we yield to the temptations of the Devil, and sin with the Devil, will not God punish us with the Devil?

A. Yes. The judge will say to them on his left hand, Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. Mathew xxv. 41, 45.

REMARKS.

First. *Angels have sinned.* And is there any thing absurd in the supposition? "Is there any thing incredible, any thing contradictory to reason, to the light of nature, and to the analogy of God's works, that, as there are wicked *men*, there may be wicked *spirits* also? If evil is allowed to exist at all, at what point in the scale of created

beings can we decide that it shall be found no longer?" "All that, in the nature of the case, seems necessary to accomplish the fall of any finite being, is a sufficient temptation. Temptation, for aught that now appears, may rise to any degree beneath infinite: and there is no more reason to suppose the strength of an angel, or his habits of virtue, are sufficient to resist all possible temptation, than there is to suppose the strength of man is sufficient. The same temptation which would overcome the man, might not, indeed, overcome an angel: but a temptation sufficiently increased to bear some adequate proportion to his disposition to resist, might; and doubtless would overcome him. Nor is there any apparent reason, why God should be obliged to secure an angel from falling, any more than there is, why he should secure a man." If, therefore, angels are allowed to exist at all, there seems no greater improbability that they should have sinned, than there is that man should have done so.

Secondly. *Many angels have sinned.* We know, upon the authority of the sacred oracles, that our Lord cast "*seven*" of those wicked spirits out of Mary Magdalene: and that, from the demoniac of Gadara, he ejected a company so great as to deserve the name of "*legion.*" But what are two individuals beside the whole human race? And what must be the entire army from which such detachments as these are allotted to the molestation of solitary individuals? "The

parts of tempter and accuser, which are, indeed, by the Holy Ghost, most frequently ascribed to Satan, the Prince of Devils, inasmuch as they imply, if not the continual, yet the very frequent presence, promptings, and superintendence of such an agent with every man, may convince us that—as God alone is omnipresent—the name Satan is applied to many individuals; and that these individuals are sufficiently numerous to lay siege to every heart, and to keep a watch over every action of mankind."

THIRDLY. *The angels that sinned were cast out of Heaven, and are reserved unto the judgment, to be punished.* We commonly hold, that the Devils are in hell. The ancient fathers, on the contrary, placed their habitation in the air. Jerome says, it was the general opinion of the doctors of the church, that the air, between the heaven and the earth, was filled with evil spirits. There are Scripture reasons for both of these suppositions. St. Peter says, that "God spared not the angels that sinned; but cast them down to hell" (*tartarus*). St. Paul calls Satan, "the Prince of the power of the air:" and Job and Peter represent the Devil as "going up and down in the earth, and walking to and fro in it." It is, therefore, not material, which of these opinions we adopt: especially, since their harmony is perfectly easy and natural, in the probability, that the *leaders*, in this fatal conspiracy, are more closely confined, with only occasional privileges; while those of their *compeers*, who were seduced by

them into rebellion, are permitted to roam more at large over the world. The crime of both, however, was the same in its essential elements; and their ultimate destiny is the same. Engaged together in rebellion, the utmost rigor of their punishment is only suspended for a moment. Destitute of happiness at present, they stand in constant anticipation of a far more fearful, and certain judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Mat. xiii. 29, *ib.* xxv. 41.

LESSON XXI.

CREATION—MAN.

Question. You said, a few lessons back, that on the sixth day of the world, God made man, both male and female: out of what did God make the body of man?

Answer. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground. Gen. ii. 7, *ib.* iii. 19, 23. Job x. 9. Ps. ciii. 14. Eccl. xii. 7. Is. lxiv. 8.

Q. When man was first formed of the dust, did he possess life and breath, as he now does?

A. No. But God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Gen. ii. 7. Job xxxiii. 4. Is. ii. 22. Acts xvii. 25.

Q. Did not God also give to man a thinking, feeling, and immortal spirit?

A. Yes. There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Job xxxii. 8. Pro. xx. 27. Eccl. 12, 7. Is. xxxi. 3, *ib.* xlii. 5. Zech. xii. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 45.

Q. By what name did God call the man, after he had made him, and had given him life and spirit?

A. In the day that God created man, male and female created he them, and blessed them, and he called their name *Adam*. Gen. v. 1, 2.

Q. What was the moral and spiritual character of man, as he came from the hand of God?

A. God created man in his own image. Gen. i. 27. 1 Corinthians xi. 7. James iii. 9.

Q. What do you understand by the "image of God," in this place?

A. The image of God, in which Adam was created, consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. Colossians iii. 10. Ephesians iv. 23, 24. Ecclesiastes vii. 29.

Q. Where did God place Adam, after he had made him in his own image?

A. The Lord God planted a garden, eastward in Eden; and there put the man whom he had

formed, to dress and to keep it. Genesis ii. 8. 15.

Q. Did God make any provision for the happiness of man, while in the garden of Eden?

A. Yes. Out of the ground, made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Gen. ii. 9. Isaiah li. 3.

Q. What command did the Lord give to Adam concerning the trees of the garden?

A. The Lord God commandeth the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat; except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Thou shalt not eat of it. Gen. ii. 16, 17.

Q. What reason did God assign, why Adam must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

A. For, said God, in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Gen. ii .17, *ib.* iii. 3. Rom. vi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 56. James i. 15.

Q. Did God give to man any authority over any other of his works, besides the trees of the garden?

A. Yes. God blessed them, and said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the

fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. Genesis i. 28. Psalms viii. 5–8.

REMARKS.

First. *The creation of man was attended with peculiar ceremony.* When the foundations of the earth were laid, and the heavens were stretched as a curtain, God simply spake and it was done; he commanded, and they stood fast. But when man, their occupant, was to be created, a solemn council was held in the chambers of eternity. The Most High said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." To whom did God thus speak? Not to man: for man did not yet exist. Not to angels: because, (1) angels were not parties concerned in the creation of the world: and (2) it is not said that man was created in the likeness of angels, but in the image of God. To whom, then, does "*us*" refer? It directs our thoughts to the mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity, by whom, in an equal and united sense, man was made. Here, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—three divine persons, in one God—in holy conclave, consult upon the existence, nature, faculties, relations and destinies of man. How fearfully grand are to be the next exhibitions of the divine power! How amazingly awful are the realities involved in the next act of his Almighty hand! Who, that has read the opening pages of man's subsequent history, feels not, that the moment's pause was pregnant with events of

the most overwhelming magnitude? The decree has gone forth. Man is formed.

SECONDLY. *Man was fearfully, and wonderfully made,*" He is a compound being—compounded of body and soul. In one organization, of the most exquisite texture, are combined all the essential elements of the grossest matter, and the most refined and ethereal spirit. He was to be the connecting link between earth and heaven. His body, consisting of more than a million of parts—greater and smaller—wrought and interarticulated with the most consummate skill and wisdom, in its essence, differed in nothing from the merest clod beneath his feet. His soul, divine in its origin, and semi-divine in its faculties and attributes, we know not, was inferior to the most exalted intelligence divine power had ever produced. To a form erect, and capable of the most easy and graceful motions, was added a countenance expressive of the highest intelligence. The senses—tasting, hearing, seeing, &c.—are, of themselves, worlds of wonder. These were to be the avenues of communication with this lower world: as reason, imagination, hope, memory, will, &c. are the media of intercourse, with the world within and the world above. How vast are the capacities of the soul! At one bound, *imagination* sweeps over earth and heaven —surveys the illimitable extents of creation—counts the stars, and weighs the worlds in a balance. *Reason* checks the precipitate whirl of creation—suspends the universe, moral and ma-

terial upon a poise—calculates its dimensions—describes its relations—foretells its wants, its destinies and its end. *Hope* dissipates every cloud, surmounts every difficulty, ascends every steep, overleaps every barrier, stills every storm and tempest; and, with more than chemical power, extracts good out of every event, painful or pleasant, bitter or sweet, prosperous or adverse. How wonderous are the powers of the *will!* How amazingly mysterious is its influence! Diffusing itself through the whole man, at once it acts upon every bone, upon every muscle, and upon every fibre—prompting their motions, directing their course, and compelling their measures. It is the will that loves or hates, chooses or refuses, rejoices or mourns, approves or disapproves. It is the will that gives to reason her strength—to imagination her brilliancy—and to hope her buoyancy. Will keeps the treasures of the entire man. What will says, the man does: and what will says not, man does not. How extraordinary is the power of the will! How wonderful is man!

THIRDLY. *We shall hereafter see, that, both in a natural and a federal sense, the first man involved the whole human race.* On the day that God made man, he called his name *Adam*. This appellation was generic. It not only distinguished man from every other species of existence, but it also embraced within its comprehension the entire species of man. On the same day, God made, in embryo, of one blood all nations of men

for to dwell on the earth, and determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations. He was the father—they are the children. From him sprang so many as the stars for multitude, and as the sand upon the seashore innumerable. In him, all were created "upright" —were "made in the similitude of God." In him, all were "crowned with glory and honor," and in an inferior sense, were constituted "the lords of creation." In him, was given to all "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of heaven, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." In him, as their representative head, all were placed upon probation in the garden of Eden: and, as St. Paul called those the acts of Levi, which were performed by his father, Abraham, generations before—saying, "Levi paid tithes in the loins of his father;" (Heb. vii. 9, 10) so, the acts of their father, Adam, are accounted to his posterity. When he partook of the forbidden fruit, and fell from his uprightness, they were implicated in that act and in that fall. "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners." "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12, 18, 19.)

Fourthly. *The first man was created in the moral likeness of God.* No member of the human race ever possessed higher qualifications to sustain the representative relations of Adam, than

did he himself. To say nothing of the faculties and attributes, which his posterity have inherited —but which they, perhaps, possess, in a far inferior degree—who, of all his descendants, has ever come into the world with equal moral advantages? His reason was unbeclouded, his will was upright, his affections were pure. The sentiments of the moral law were graven on his heart. The emotions of his soul vibrated in unison with the divine loveliness. He heard without distrust, and confided without reserve. Sin, that deadly malaria, had infected no part of his nature. He possessed no inordinate desires, no ungovernable passions, no unhallowed impulses. "Knowledge, righteousness and true holiness," spread their benign and peaceful influence over his entire spirit, and occupied the inner temple of his soul without a rival adversary. Such was the native condition of his mind, that uninfluenced by the tempter, (and we know not, that God was obliged to protect either him or his posterity from temptation while on a state of trial) godliness, righteousness and truth, had been the continued and necessary result. But man created in honor abode not. He hearkened to temptation, and fell from his original uprightness: and is there room left to doubt, that under similar circumstances, we had acted in like manner? "Ye are witnesses to yourselves, that ye are the children of Adam."

LESSON XXII.

MAN—THE FALL OF.

QUESTION. In the last lesson, you said, that God—having made the first man holy and happy, and having placed him in the garden of Eden—commanded him not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; did he keep that command?

ANSWER. No. When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also to her husband, and he did eat. Gen. iii. 6.

Q. Was it not a great sin in Adam and Eve, thus to violate a known command of God?

A. Yes it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 2 Peter ii. 21. Rom. vii. 13.

Q. When God came down to inspect their conduct, whether they had obeyed his voice or not, what did they do?

A. When they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord among the trees of the garden. Gen. iii. 8.

Q. Why did they hide themselves?

A. Adam said unto the Lord, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid. Gen. iii. 10.

Q. Did not this show that they felt themselves guilty?

A. Yes. The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion. Pro. xxviii. 1. Job xxiv. 13–17. 1 John iii. 20, 21. Rev. vi. 15–17.

Q. How did Adam attempt to excuse the sin which he had committed?

A. The man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat. Gen. iii. 12.

Q. What excuse did the woman offer?

A. The woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. Gen. iii. 13. 2 Cor. xi. 3.

Q. Were these excuses sufficient to justify their criminal conduct?

A. No. No excuse can justify sin. Ex. xxiii. 7, *ib*, xxxiv. 7. Job x. 14, *ib*. xxxvi. 21. Ps. lxvi. 18. Ezek. xviiii. 4. Heb. ix. 22.

Q. What are we commanded to do when we are enticed to do wickedly?

A. If sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Pro. i. 10. Gen. xxxix. 7, 8. Eph. v. 11.

Q. Is it not wrong to even listen to wicked counsel?

A. Yes. Cease to hear the instruction that causeth thee to err from the words of knowledge. Pro. xix. 27. Deut. xiii. 1–4. Ps. i. 1. Jer. xxiii. 16, 17.

Q. How did God express his displeasure towards the serpent in this instance?

A. The Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; and upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. Gen. iii. 14, 15.

Q. What did he say unto the woman?

A. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shalt be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. Gen. iii. 16. 1 Cor. xi. 3, *ib*. xiv. 34.

Eph. v. 22–24. 1 Tim. ii. 11, 14. 1 Pet. iii. 1–6.

Q. What did God say unto the man?

A. Unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shall not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Gen. iii. 17–19.

Q. Did not the Lord drive them both out from the garden of Eden?

A. Yes. The Lord God drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Gen. iii. 23, 24.

Q. Why did the Lord drive them out from the garden of Eden?

A. Lest the man should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. Gen. iii. 22.

Q. What penalty did God annex to eating the forbidden fruit?

A. God said, In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Gen. ii. 17. Rom. vi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 56. James i. 15. 1 John v. 16, 17.

REMARKS.

It is not suited to the designs of the present work to enter into an examination of the various conjectures which have been instituted respecting the extraordinary personage by whom our first parents were seduced into sin. Some maintain, that no real serpent was intended; but that their seduction was effected *immediately* by the Devil, in person. Others, with equal warmth, contend that Satan had no hand in the temptation; but that it was wholly effected by a *natural serpent*. That opinion, which to us seems more probable, and which is most commonly held, is, that Satan was the *agent;* and that a serpent was the *instrument*. There is the less reason to doubt this, since we know that Satan is represented in Scripture as an implacable enemy to God and man; and since he is particularly styled "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." (Rev. xii. 9.) Be this as it may, however, their fall was actually accomplished, and with them, that of their entire posterity. Their sin with its consequences, is that in which we are most deeply interested, and demands our special attention.

First—The Sin of Adam. In this we remark,

(1) *A contempt of the divine authority.* Adam was placed upon probation under a *positive law.* The main difference between a *moral* and *positive* precept is, that the former is *commanded because it is right;* the latter is *right because it is commanded.* The obligation of the one, arises prin-

cipally from its inherent character; that of the other arises solely from the authority whence it emanates. For this reason it is, that positive precepts are reckoned the most proper trial of obedience; and for this reason, also, the violation of a positive precept is esteemed more blamable conduct, and a stronger evidence of the divine contempt, than might be found in a transgression of some moral obligations. In this instance, obedience and disobedience must be measured by the same rule: and as obedience, in the one case, had been the highest mark of respect for the divine authority; so the disobedience, in the other, was the highest mark of disrespect for that authority. Here was the crime of Adam. He not only disregarded all the sentiments of the moral law graven on his heart; but he also trampled beneath his feet the sovereign authority of the great original of his being.

(2) *A contempt of the divine veracity.* "The Lord is a God of truth"—"his word is true from the beginning." On this account he demands the implicit confidence of his creatures: and in this character, he presented himself before Adam in the garden of Eden, forbidding him to "eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil;" saying, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." In opposition to this, the tempter said, "Thou shalt not surely die." To this latter declaration he hearkened; and despising the veracity of God not less than his authority, he partook of the interdicted fruit, and did eat. This

offence involved the malignity of a disbelief of the divine word—the malignity of charging God with falsehood. "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar." (1 John v. 10.)

(3) *A crime of deliberation.* It is worthy of special remark, that the inspired apostle says, "Adam was not deceived." (1 Tim. ii. 14.) By whatever surprise the woman was taken—however ignorant she may have been of the character of the person by whom she was tempted, and of the important consequences which her act was to involve—nothing of this can be supposed of the man. The essential elements of an unwary act, were all wanting in his case. He saw, not thro' a glass darkly, all the relations he sustained to God, and to his subsequent posterity—he beheld with open face the divine command, and the counsels of the tempter—he distinctly understood what were to be the rewards of his fidelity, and the penalty of his unbelief and sin—he deliberated upon the one and the other, and, with calm and measured steps, he transcended the limits which the infinite sovereign had placed for his feet. "He took of the fruit of the tree and did eat." For this act there were none of the extenuations of ignorance—none of the apologies of deception. Whatever contempt of the divine veracity, or the divine authority it showed, the iniquity of his deed was heightened by the consideration, that *it was performed deliberately and knowingly.*

SECONDLY—THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM'S SIN. The consequences of Adam's transgression,

as they relate both to himself and his posterity, so, they are distinguishable into those which were *natural and immediate*, and those which are *penal and remote*. Of the former remark,

(1) *The loss of the divine image.* It is not certain how long Adam retained his uncorrupted innocence. But it is presumed, that, had he done so for a certain length of time—perhaps until the identical period when "he heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day"—he and his posterity had been confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness forever. But alas! he sinned and the felicity was lost, *eternally lost.* In the stead of a perpetual confirmation in holiness, he and they were registered in the annals of eternity, as sinners in the divine government. The moral likeness of God was effaced from his heart, and a transcript of the infernal tempter was drawn in the stead thereof. "Righteousness and true holiness," insulted and agrieved, abandoned the earth. The divine knowledge was obliterated from the soul; and man, a miserable, moral wreck, was left to wander an alien from God and from Heaven.

(2) *The corruption of his nature.* The line of virtue once crossed, there are no bounds to sin. The flood gates of iniquity, broken up, vice, like an ever-swelling tide, rushes in upon the soul. The first step of revolt corrupted the judgment, seared the conscience, estranged the will, and poisoned the affections. "The whole head became sick, and the whole heart was faint."

Having cast off his rightful allegiance to God, man became the abject and servile panderer to every foul and loathsome passion. Malice, envy and rage—deceit, hypocrisy and guile—covetousness and sensuality—all abominations, claimed him as their vassal, and led him a willing captive into captivity. "He that committeth sin is the servant of sin."

(3) *The withdrawment of the divine smiles and approbation.* A smile of benignant pleasure and complacency, rested upon the divine countenance, as he beheld man wearing his own image, and breathing his spirit. Nor did that smile create a small part of the bliss of Eden. The recognition of his Father's love, imparted unutterable joy to the heart of the man, and converted the solitary place into a paradise below: and had he retained his integrity, that joy had abode as a river, and increased as the waves of the sea. But man created in honor, abode not; and with his fall, a dark cloud passed over the bright source of his bliss. In expression of his displeasure at sin, God withdrew the smiles of his love, and man, rebellious and fallen, was driven a miserable exile from his native garden. With cares and sorrows, and labors multiplying upon his heart, he was commanded to go from him, the light of whose countenance alone could dispel the sorrows of the mind, and give even affliction a joy.

(4) *The disorganization of the natural and physical world.* We set down the irregularities and miseries of the present world among those ef-

fects of sin, which are not so much its penal consequences, as its concomitant and natural result. They are to sin, what the rigors of the dungeon are to capital offence: not the punishment of crime, but God's method of bringing men to the retributions of the last day. How incalculably great are the miseries of life—miseries superinduced by sin! O man! how fatal to the universal peace of animated nature, was thy transgression. How deep the agonies and pains, with which thy posterity enter life! How abject the state in which they pass it through! Amid what heart-rendings and tears do they end it! From the cradle to the grave, all is contention and strife—all is labor and anxiety—all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

LESSON XXIII.

SIN—ORIGINAL AND UNIVERSAL.

QUESTION. What relation did Adam sustain to the rest of the human race?

ANSWER. Adam sustained to the rest of the human race both a natural, and a federal relation.

Q. What do you mean by a natural relation?

A. A natural relation is that which a father bears to his son.

Q. What is a federal relation?

A. A federal relation is that, in which one person represents another in the eyes of the law.

Q. Can you give an example of a natural relation?

A. Yes. Adam was naturally related to the son, whom he begat in his own likeness.

Q. Can you give an example of a federal relation?

A. Yes. When one person stands in behalf of another, so that the acts of the former are charged to the account of the latter, there will be a federal relation between them.

Q. If, then, Adam sustained a natural relation to the whole human race, are not all men, in a proper sense, his descendants?

A. Yes. Of one blood hath God made all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations. Acts xvii. 26.

Q. In like manner, if he sustained a federal relation to all men, must not all men have been involved in the guilt and condemation of his fall?

A. Yes. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners; and by the offence of one,

judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Rom. v. 12–19.

Q. What do the Scriptures say concerning the corruption of the human race?

A. God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. Gen. vi. 12. Ps. x. 2–11, *ib.* xiv. 1–3, *ib.* xxxvi. 1–4. Is. lix. 2–8. Rom. i. 21–32, *ib.* ii. 1, *ib.* iii. 9–19. Gal. iii. 22.

Q. Do not all persons discover a wicked and depraved disposition very early in life?

A. Yes, The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Ps. lviii. 3–5. Job xx. 11. Pro. xxii. 15. Eccl. ix 3. Is. xlviii. 8.

Q. Is it not, therefore, certain, that infants are born into the world under guilt and condemnation?

A. Yes. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Ps. li. 5. Gen. v. 3. Job xi. 12 ,*ib.* xiv. 4. John iii. 6, *ib.* ix. 34. Eph. ii. 3.

Q. What, then, becomes of those who die in infancy?

A. Children dying in infancy would be lost, if the sovereign and mysterious grace of God did not renew and save them. 2 Sam. xii. 16–23. Mat. xix. 13, 14, *ib.* xx. 15. John iii. 8. Rom. ix. 14–16.

REMARKS.

Original sin, is that corruption of our nature which was derived from Adam—the natural and federal head of an entire race—and in which all our actual sins originate. It is not for us to find fault with the doctrine of original and inherited depravity: especially, since God hath observed the same system of imputation in man's recovery and justification, as in his fall and condemnation. It is beyond all contradiction, that "Adam begat a son in his own likeness"—that, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," and "walketh after the flesh"—that "no one can bring a clean thing out of an unclean"—that "man is born as the wild ass' colt"—that "folly is bound up in the heart of a child"—that "the heart of the sons of men, is fully set in them to do evil"—that "man is a transgressor from the womb"—that "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners"—that "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation"—that "*by nature we are all the children of wrath even as others.*" (Gen. iii. 6. John iii. 6. Rom. viii. 5. Job xiv. 4, *ib.* xi. 12. Pro. xxii. 15. Eccl. ix. 3. Is. xlviii. 8. Rom. v. 18, 19. Eph. 2, 3) We, therefore, subjoin the following, as additional evidence of the *universality* of sin:

FIRST. *All men everywhere acknowledge the necessity for an atonement for sin.* It is not material to this argument, what form of religion men practise; nor, yet, what satisfaction they consider sufficient for the offences they commit. There

is in every nation, and among every tribe, a recognition of crime; and a conviction that *some satisfaction* is necessary in order to propitiate its offended deity. Every nation on earth, has some form of religious rites and ceremonies. Every nation has its temples, its altars, its priests, and its sacrifices. Every nation is wont to confess sin—is wont to deplore crime—is wont to supplicate a divinity, who is esteemed to be justly incensed at the moral defection of the people.

Secondly. *Christ has offered a satisfaction for sin, universal in its extent.* "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also, for the sins of the whole world." The use which the apostle Paul makes of this doctrine is, that all men needed such a sacrifice. "Because, said he, we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all." 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

Thirdly. "*God commandeth all men every where to repent.*" The doctrine of repentance is based upon the supposition that man is a sinner; and as a duty, it can relate only to such. Hence, said our Lord, "we come, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance:" and the apostle, "I perceive that thy heart is not right in the sight of God: wherefore, repent of this thy wicked-

ness." Indeed, there can be no repentance where there is no sin: and a universal command to repent, implies the universal existence of sin.

FOURTHLY. *It is declared, that without faith in Christ, no man can be saved.* "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." These declarations extend with equal force to every man, of every nation, and in every age of the world. In one universal fall, all are concluded in unbelief and sin; and the Jew can be justified alone by faith; and the Gentile alone through faith. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ must all be made alive."

FIFTHLY. *In like manner it is said, that no man can be saved without regeneration.* "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Except a man be born of the spirit and of water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The doctrine of regeneration implies, that the nature of man is depraved—that this depravity is a disqualification for the kingdom of heaven—and that it must be taken away, as a prerequisite to its enjoyment: and the universality of this requisition, is absolute evidence of the universality of human depravity.

SIXTHLY. *We are witnesses to ourselves, that sin, like a deadly malaria, has infected our entire*

race. How little confidence does man repose in his fellow man! and how multitudinous are the means of defence, with which they are ever and anon providing themselves, against the endless outbreaks of vice! To refer alone to the means furnished and sanctioned by law, for the safety of our persons and property—the bolts, bars and locks—the notes bonds and deeds—the jails and dungeons, the chains and galleys—the post, the pillory and the gibbet, by which we secure our houses, prevent the mischiefs of fraud and violence, punish some offenders, or deter others from similar nefarious perpetrations: all these, and the like, are gloomy and dreadful proofs of the corruption of the world in which they exist. They exist in all places, wherever men are found, of sufficient capacity, and under proper circumstances, to attempt a regular opposition to crimes, a continued preservation of peace, and a general establishment of personal safety. The sinfulness which they are intended to resist, is, therefore, equally universal.

LESSON XXIV.

THE LAW.

QUESTION. What is the sum of the whole law of God?

ANSWER. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with

all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbor as thyself. Luke x. 27. Deut. vi. 5, *ib.* x. 12. Lev. xix. 18. Mat. vii. 12, *ib.* xix. 19, *ib.* xxii. 36–40. Rom. xiii. 8–10. Gal. v. 14. 1 John iv. 7, 20, 21.

Q. Is there any thing unreasonable or unjust in the requisitions of God's law?

A. No. The law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Rom. vii. 12. Ps. xix. 7–10. Mic. vi. 8. 1 Tim. i. 8–10.

Q. What kind of obedience does the law require?

A. The law requires continual and universal obedience: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them. Gal. iii. 10 Deut. xxvii. 26. Jer. xi. 3. Ezek. xviii. iv, Jas. i. 15.

Q. If Adam, and all his posterity, had invariably kept the law from the first—loving God supremely, and their neighbor as themselves, would they not have been happy forever?

A. Yes. If there had been no sin, there had been no condemnation.

Q. But have not all men violated the great principles involved in the law?

A. Yes. By one man, sin entered into the

world, and death by sin: and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom. v. 15. Gen. vi. 12. Rom. ii. 14, 15, *ib.* iii. 9–19. Gal. iii. 22.

Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is a transgression of the law. 1 John iii. 4. Rom. iii. 20, *ib.* iv. 15, *ib.* v. 13, *ib.* vii. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 56.

Q. Does the law of God condemn all unrighteousness as sin?

A. Yes. Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James ii. 10. Mat. v. 19. Gal. iii. 10. 1 John v. 17.

Q. Since, then, the law condemns all unrighteousness; and since all have sinned, are not all men under the condemnation of the law?

A. Yes. As many as are under the law, are under the curse of the law. Gal. iii. 10. Rom. iii. 19, *ib.* iv. 15., *ib.* vii. 8–11.

Q. Can any man now be justified by his own works?

A. No. By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. Rom. iii. 20. Job ix. 23, *ib.* xxv. 4–6. Ps. cxliii. 2. Romans iv. 2. Gal. ii. 16, *ib.* iii. 11, *ib.* v. 4. Tit. iii. 5.

Q. Is any man able to atone for the sins of another man?

A. No. None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. Ps. xliii. 7–9. Job ix. 32, 33.

Q. Can any man possibly bring a sufficient atonement for his own sins?

A. No. The Lord will not be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil. If I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul, it will avail nothing. Mich. vi. 7. Ps. l. 7–17, *ib.* li. 16. Is. lxvi. 3. Heb. vii. 18, *ib.* x. 1–4.

REMARKS.

"The law entered that the offence might abound." Here was the design of the moral law. It was not given as a covenant of works, in the observance of which, man might be saved: but simply as a means by which the extent and enormity of sin might be illustrated. As in every thing else, the mind becomes informed by dwelling on particulars; so "by the specifications of the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.) For this reason, also, the penalty of sin was not repeated in the giving of the *moral law*, as in the case of the law given to Adam in the garden. Nevertheless, we may remark,

First. *The obligations of the moral law are absolute.* Their foundation is laid in the relation of beings. It were impossible that intelligent creatures should exist, related to the divine Creator, without being at the same time under obligation to love him, in the manner described in the law: and it were equally impossible that they should exist related to each other, as are men and angels, without being under obligation to love each other in that inferior degree which the same law describes.

Secondly. *The requisitions of the moral law are reasonable.* God could claim nothing, either for himself, or in behalf of his creatures, which *right reason* did not approve. "What doth the Lord require of thee, but that thou shouldst love mercy, do justly, and walk humbly with thy God? —but that, "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, ye should do also unto them?—but that ye should render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's?" Less than this, reason, could not demand.

Thirdly. *The obligations of the moral law are universal.* (1) *As to duties.* It embraces every *positive precept*, the reason of which we may not see at first, not less than those requisitions, the reason of which we do see: and because God cannot positively command any thing which his relations to the universe do not authorize him to do, or which it would be wrong and sinful in his creatures to perform, therefore his

positive precepts are equally binding with the articles of the *decalogue*. (2) *As to subjects*. Every intelligent creature in heaven, earth, or hell, is under the regulations of the moral law. Virtue in heaven, is a conformity to this law: and vice on earth or in the world of despair, is a disconformity to its requisitions. The infant is born under it; and the heathen, who have not the written law, show by their acts of accusing or else excusing one another, that the work of the law is written on their hearts. (3) *As to the extent of its demands*. The law extends its dominion over every faculty of men and angels. God requires of no being more than he has *physical ability* to do: but he does require to the utmost of that ability. He lays a levy upon every mental and bodily power: and demands, that "thou love him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbor as thy self."

FOURTHLY. *The obligations of the moral law are perpetual*. The ceremonial and judicial laws of the Jews, originating in the necessities of a temporary occasion, were designed only for a temporary existence; and were abolished, the one with the death of Christ, and the other with the dispersion of their nation. The moral law, on the contrary, originating in the relations of beings, extends unalterably through a duration commensurate with the existence of those relations. In all time, and in all places, it is the rule and measure of right and wrong: and we may as

readily imagine, that the necessary distinction between right and wrong shall cease to exist—so that right will be no more right, and wrong will be no more wrong; as that the moral law, the rule of the one, and the measure of the other, should be abrogated. There can be no sin where there is no law; and no condemnation where there is no sin; and by consequence, men will cease to commit sin, and the wicked will cease to be condemned, in the day when God blots out this law from the annals of eternity. Those who are saved, will not, indeed, be saved on the ground that they have fulfilled the law; but they will be saved in perfect harmony with the law fulfilled in the person of their substitute: and those who are lost to the latest ages, will be condemned as violators of this law. The devotions of heaven will recognize the claims of the moral law; and this law will constitute the strength of the chains of hell. Like its divine original, it was always holy, just and good; and without variableness or shadow of turning, will remain thus forever. We therefore infer,

(1) *The iniquity of sin.* Every sin originates in a principle of corruption and depravity; and in its essential elements partakes of the character of the first transgression. It is a wonton infraction of the divine command, and a criminal contempt of the divine authority. Nay, it is a violation of natural justice, common reason, and the necessary relation of beings. No man can commit sin, without withholding from the deity

that to which he has a just and soverign right; and from his fellow man that, to which the principles of universal equity entitle him. Hence, to be a sinner, is to be unrighteous. "All unrighteousness is sin."

(2) *Sinners are condemned righteously and justly.* "Every man consents unto the law, that it is good"—that were it strictly and universally obeyed, this world—with all its storms and tempests—with all its "hailstones and fire"—with all its plagues and diseases—were a Paradise still. "Out of thine own mouth, shalt thou be condemned, O thou wicked servant." Why acknowledge that the law is holy, just and good, and yet do not what it says? It avails nothing to say, that "we are carnal sold under sin." This were the same as if we should say, "We do not keep the law, because we love to transgress it." And will not the Almighty avenge himself of his adversaries? "When he shall arise to contend with thee, thou wilt not be able to answer him one of a thousand."

(3) *The impossibility of being justified by works.* It is self-evident, that no subsequent act of obedience to a violated law which, during our entire existence, taxes every possible ability, can in any wise atone for the sins that are past. Upon that supposition, supererogation is out of the question. In no one instance, before or after, can man render to the law more than the obedience of that moment requires. It is equally certain, that fidelity to no other law will wash away the sins against

the moral law. This observation applies, with peculiar force, to the statutes of the land, the ceremonies of the church, the punctilios of the closet, and to every other expedient by which man attempts to expiate his own sins. Such acts are either embraced in the requisitions of the divine law, or they are not. If they are not. their performance cannot fulfill that law; if they are, present obedience cannot satisfy for past disobedience—it can avail only for the present moment. What though "Naaman, captain of the hosts of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, and a mighty man in valor"? Still, "he was a leper." And what though we sustain all the relations of the world, to the admiration of our fellow men? Still we are sinners: and no effort of our own can take away that sin. "If there had been a law given, which could have given life; then, verily, righteousness had been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. (Gal. iii. 21, 22.)

LESSON XXV.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY.

QUESTION. You said that the law is reasonable and good: why, then, do not men keep the law?

A. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed, can be. Romans viii. 7. John v. 42. Eph. iv. 18, 19. Col. i 21.

Q. Are the hearts of all men wicked and depraved?

A. Yes. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Jer. xvii. 9. Deut. v. 29. 1 Kings ii. 44. Ps. x. 6–10. Eccl. viii. 11, *ib.* ix. 3. Acts viii. 21, 22.

Q. Does all the conduct of men proceed from their wicked hearts?

A. Yes. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: and these are the things which defile a man. Mat. xv. 19, 20. Job xxxi. 1. Ps. l. 21, *ib.* xcv. 10. Pro. iv. 23. Is. xliv. 20. Hos. iv. 12. Mark vii. 21, 23. Rom. vii. 7. Jas. i. 15, 1 John iii. 15.

Q. Can any thing religiously good come out of the wicked hearts of men?

A. No. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth; and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Gen. vi. 5. Ezra ix. 6. Ps. xxxviii. 4, *ib.* xl. 12. Pro. xv. 26, *ib.* xxiv. 9. Eccl. vii.

29. Mat. vii. 16–20, *ib.* xii. 34–37. Luke xvi. 15. Eph. ii. 1–3.

Q. In what manner does God regard the ways of wicked men?

A. The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. Pro. xv. 9. Job xv. 16. Ps. 5. 4–6, *ib.* x. 3. Pro. vi. 16–19. Jer. xliv. 4. Ezek. xi. 21.

Q. To what are sinners compared, that represent their loathsomeness in the sight of God?

A. Sinners are compared to a body covered with "wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores" —to "an open sepulchre, filled with all manner of uncleanness"—and to "a body of death." Is. i. 6. Mat. xxiii. 27 28. Rom. vii. 24.

Q. It was a law among the Jews, if a man was found diseased with the leprosy, he should be expelled from the society of his people, and permitted to have no further intercourse with them: will not God, in the last day, expel all those who continue in sin from the society of the good, forever?

A. Yes. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there

shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Mat. xiii. 41, 42, 49, 50. Ps. i. 5. Mal. iii. 18. Mat. iii. 12, *ib.* xxv. 31–45. Rom. ii. 6–11. 2 Thes. i. 6–10.

REMARKS.

It is confidently believed, that a careful examination of the numerous Scripture references in the lesson above, will abundantly satisfy the impartial reader that, in the divine estimation, *the nature of man is totally depraved and wicked*—that it is wholly estranged and "alienated from the life of God"—that "the carnal mind is enmity against God"—that "every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil, and that continually"—and that "sin by the commandment is exceeding sinful." Nevertheless,

First. *Total depravity does not consist in the numerical greatness of sin.* The number of our sins is passing great. Should the best man of our fallen race write down a list of such of his offences as an imperfect memory might recall—sins of commission and of omission—sins of pride and of passion—sins of youth and of riper years—sins of deliberation and of inadvertency—sins of word and deed—sins directly against God, and sins against his fellow men—sins committed in every place publicly and privately: he would be overwhelmed with astonishment at the long, dark catalogue. But how small a part of his actual iniquities would such a list contain! What vast numbers have entirely escaped our recollection!

What multitudes were committed, of which the mind, in the heat of excitement, the whirl of pleasure. or the hurry of business, never took any cognizance! In numberless instances, the divine law was infringed, when blinded by interest, or the infatuation of gain, we even esteemed our crimes a virtue: (Pro. xx. 14) and "called evil good, and good evil; put darkness for light, and light for darkness; put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." (Is. v. 20.) "Our iniquities are increased over our head; and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens." (Ezra ix. 6. Ps. xxxviii. 4, *b.* xl. 12.) But it is not in the multitude of these, that total depravity consists. Were this so, then the youth and the infant were not totally depraved.

SECONDLY. *Total depravity does not consist in the circumstantial aggravation of sins.* No sin in the divine government is to be considered a trifle: nevertheless, there is a circumstancial difference in the enormity of crimes. Some sins are more heinous than others. There is a sin of ignorance, and a sin against knowledge. There is a presumptuous transgression, and a secret fault. There is a pardonable offence, and an offence which is unpardonable. (Mark iii. 28, 29. 1 John v. 16, 17.) The degree of our knowledge and deliberation; the position we occupy and the relations we sustain; the office we bear and the influence we exert — these are the casualties which, by increasing our responsibilities, give to crime its multiform shades of turpitude. What

malignancy enters into that man's sins who, madly breaking over the restraints of the salutary training of his youth, and gathering obstinacy and strength with increasing years, precipitates his ruin through a flood of gospel light and mercy! (John iii. 19, *ib.* xv. 22, 25.) If to this he add the responsibilities of a father, the character of a statesman, and the wide extended influence of an infidel author, poisoning the streams of knowledge to the latest period of time, that malignity is increased in a proportionate ratio. But, after we have invested actual sin with all the shades of blackness and darkness—with all the features of odiousness and shame of which it is susceptible, still it is not here that we are to look for total depravity. If this were so, then but few, if any, are totally depraved.

THIRDLY. *Total depravity does not consist in a physical incapacity to perform an act legally good before God.* God has never required of man more than he had the physical capacity to do: and if man is at present wholly unable to fulfill the law, it is not for the want of any *natural ability.* Nevertheless, as in human governments, the moment sentence of capital condemnation passes upon an offender, he is regarded dead, so that no act he may thereafter perform will be considered legal—not even to the making of a will: so, in the divine government, sin is a capital offence; and the moment it has been committed, the sinner is legally dead; and thenceforward, in the eyes of the law, all his good works (which

we grant him to perform) are null and void. From that instant, he is wholly incapacitated to put forth so much as a will, which the law will recognize as valid. All his natural power, to the contrary notwithstanding, he is "dead in trespasses and sins"—he is a "child of wrath even as others." (Eph. ii. 1–3.) But it is not in this legal incapacity that total depravity consists.

FOURTHLY. *Total depravity consists in a principle of sin and wickedness in the heart of every individual of our race.* It is not a bad head; but a bad heart—not a bad education, but a bad disposition—not an evil fortune to be born under these or those circumstances, but a bad character within, that flows out into wickedness under any circumstances of life—in any clime—in any age of the world. It is a principle of alienation from the life of God; (Eph. iv. 18) of enmity against him, and of insubjection to his righteous law: (Rom. viii. 7) in a word, it is a principle of selfishness which enters essentially into every purpose, feeling, and affection of the heart. Men are lovers of themselves more than lovers of God. (2 Tim. iii. 2–4.) Self—self-love, self-importance, self-sufficiency, self-seeking, self-glory—this is the alpha and omega of the native character of every man. "Who but myself is the centre and circumference of the world! For me the sun rises, and the rains descend! For me the seasons revolve, and God himself lives? All things were made for me, and in my pleasure, let all things find their end." These are the real sentiments

of all, and each of our fallen race. By them even the deity is dethroned; and man, poor worm of the dust, is deified. Henceforth he is now the supreme—the sole arbiter of his powers, of his affections, and of his life. The sovereignty of God is practically denied; his authority contemned; his service abandoned, and his glory trampled under foot. Here is the fountain of a sinful life, and the aggravation of criminal conduct. This is the extreme of sin. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be."

PART III.

LESSON XXVI.

COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.

QUESTION. What is a covenant?

ANSWER. A covenant is a contract, or an agreement, between two or more persons, to perform a specified business.

Q. What is the covenant of redemption?

A. The covenant of redemption is that agreement to save sinners, which was formed by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—three equal and divine persons.

Q. Do the Scriptures any where speak of a covenant of redemption?

A. Yes. In many places, the Scriptures allude to a covenant on the part of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to save sinners. Ps. ii. 6, *ib.* lxxxix. 3, 4, 19, 20. Is. xlii. 1–7. John

vi. 27. Ps. xl. 7, 8. Is. xlviii. 16, *ib.* l. 5, 6, *ib.* lxi. 1–3. John v. 30, *ib.* vi. 38–40. Is. xliv. 3, 4. Joel ii. 28. Luke xxiv. 49. Acts ii. 32, 33. Gal. iii. 4.

Q. In the covenant of redemption, what did the Son engage to do?

A. The Son engaged to bring in everlasting righteousness and plenteous redemption, that God might be just, and justify every one that believeth in Jesus. Is. xlii. 19–21, *ib.* liii. 11. Jer. xxiii. 9. Dan. ix. 24. Ps. cxxx. 7. Luke ii. 38. Rom. iii. 21–26. 1 Cor. i. 30. Heb. ix. 12–15.

Q. Was it not necessary, in order to fulfill this covenant engagement, that the Son should be subjected to great humiliation and suffering?

A. Yes. Forasmuch as the children of men are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Heb. ii: 14, 15. Luke xii: 50. John i: 14, *ib.* xii: 27. Gal. iv: 4, 5. Phil. ii: 6–8. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Q. Did the Son undertake the salvation of man-

kind, upon such humiliating and painful conditions, of his own choice, or was he compelled to do so?

A. In the covenant of redemption, the Son was voluntary: he loved us, and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour. Eph. v: 2. John x: 17, 18, *ib.* xvii: 19. Gal. i: 4, *ib.* ii: 20. 1 Tim. ii: 5, 6. Tit. ii: 13, 14.

Q. Did the Father promise to confer any peculiar privileges and honors upon the Son, on account of his voluntary condescension and death?

A. Yes. We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. Heb. ii: 9. Ps. ii: 7–9, *ib.* lxxxix: 27. Dan. vii: 13, 14. Mat. xxviii: 18. Luke i: 32. John iii: 35, *ib.* v: 22, 27. Acts ii: 36. Rom. xiv: 9. 1 Cor. xv: 27. Eph. i: 20–22. Phil. ii: 6, 11. Heb. i: 2–4. 1 Pet. iii: 22. Rev. xvii: 14.

Q. Did not the Father also guarantee the Son, that his death should not be in vain, but that thereby, a portion of the human race should certainly be saved?

A. Yes. Thus saith the Lord, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the

spoil with the strong. Is. liii. 12. Ps. lxxxix. 35–37. Is. ix: 6, 7, *ib.* liii: 10, 11. John vi: 37, *ib.* x: 15, 16, *ib.* xvii: 2, 6, 9, 24. Rom. viii: 29, 30. Eph. i: 3–5.

Q. What is the office of the Holy Ghost?

A. The office of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; to take of the things of Christ and shew them unto us; and to lead us into all truth. John xvi: 8–15, *ib.* xiv: 26.

Q. Could any man believe on the Son, in a saving manner, without the influences of the Holy Spirit?

A. No. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. xii: 3. Ps. lviii: 3–5. Mat. xiii: 11, *ib.* 16, 17. John vi: 44, 45. Acts xviii: 17. 1 Cor. ii: 6–10. 2 Cor. iv: 3–6. Eph. ii: 8. Phil. i: 29.

Q. Was the Holy Spirit, with all his gifts and influences, promised to the Son in the covenant of redemption?

A. Yes. The Lord said, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed; and my blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, and as willows by the water-courses. Is.

xliv: 34. Ps. civ: 30, *ib.* cx: 3. Is. xxxii: 15. Joel ii: 28. Luke xxiv: 49. John vii: 38, 39, *ib.* xiv: 16, 26, *ib.* xv: 26. Acts ii: 32, 33. Gal. iv: 6.

Q. When was the covenant of redemption made—embracing all these great and interesting matters?

A. The covenant of redemption was made before the world was created, or time began. Pro. viii: 22–36. Mic. v: 2. Rom. xvi: 25, 26. Eph. i: 4–7, *ib.* iii: 9–11. 2 Tim. i: 9, 10. Tit. i: 1–3. 1 Pet. i: 18–21.

Q. After the Son had covenanted to die for sinners, did he not come into the world subject to the will of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit?

A. Yes. He said, And now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me; and I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of him that sent me. Is. xliv: 16. John vi: 38. Ps. xl. 6–8. Is. l: 5, 6, *ib.* liii: 10. Zech. xiii: 7. Mat. xxvi: 10–12. Luke iv: 14. John i: 33, 34, *ib.* iii. 34. Phil: ii. 8. Heb. iii: 5, 6, *ib.* v: 5–8, *ib.* x: 6–10.

Q. Was not the Holy Spirit in like manner, sent into the world subject to the will of the Father, and of the Son?

A. Yes. Jesus said, I will send the Comforter unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth,

which proceedeth from the Father. John xv: 26. Acts ii: 32, 33.

Q. Now that the Son and the Spirit have faithfully performed their part in the covenant of redemption, will not the Father, also, graciously and faithfully pardon and accept all who come unto him believing on Christ?

A. Yes. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John i: 9. Prov. xxviii: 13. Is. xlii: 21. Mat. iii: 17. John x. 9. Rom. iv: 16. 2 Cor. v. 18–21. Gal. iii: 22. Eph. ii: 18, *ib.* iii: 11, 12. Heb. vi: 17, 20, *ib.* x: 19–22.

Q. Is there any other appointed way, whereby, sinners may approach unto God with acceptance, than by his Son Jesus Christ?

A. No. Jesus saith, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John xiv: 6. Acts iv: 12. Mark xvi: 16. John iii: 18, 19, ib. viii: 21–24.

REMARKS.

First. We have said that *the covenant of redemption was formed between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost:* not that we pretend to decide the long disputed question, concerning "*the eternal generation of the Son;*" but because, in this

relation, the persons of the adorable trinity are ordinarily represented, as engaged in the execution of that remedial scheme, which is alike the happiness of the world, and the glory of eternity. Whatever reasons, in our private judgment, may preponderate on this subject, in the present work, we would sedulously avoid, as far as truth shall allow, every arena of strife, and opposition of science, falsely so called." If the second person of the Godhead, whom we denominate the Son, is admitted to be, in the highest sense, divine, we know not, that the salvation of any, necessarily involves the belief of this, or that theory, concerning the period when he first assumed the relation of Son—whether in that character he formed with his Father the covenant of redemption, or whether he was constituted a Son in the formation of that covenant. To every candid and correct thinker it must appear obvious, that all things without the limits of time, are equally eternal, in the same manner as all points in a circumference are equally remote from the centre: and if the covenant of redemption was formed before time began, it is not material which hypothesis we adopt, both the Sonship and the covenant are, nevertheless, eternal. That Christ was the Son before his incarnation is evident, from the fact, that God sent his Son into the world; which clearly implies the existence of this relationship before he was sent as a son. Indeed, if he was not a Son before the covenant of redemption was formed—(if the terms before and after are at all applicable to eternal

things)—if in the formation of that covenant, he was constituted or "begotten" to be the Son, we would propose it as a question, whether the begetting or constituting act was not as much his own, as that of the Father? and, then, with what propriety can it be said, that he "was begotten of the Father"? On the contrary, if our conceptions can admit of any thing anterior to the formation of that blessed scheme of redeeming mercy, and if in the character of a Son, he engaged in making that covenant, then the eternal Sonship of Christ, in its highest and most absolute sense, will inevitably result. Be it our aim, however, to state obvious truths, and leave to others the unprofitable task to deal in metaphysical subtleties, and to grope in search of light, where solemn darkness reigns.

Secondly. *The covenant of redemption embraces within its limits, the entire system of providential grace.* It is the basis and origin of the mediation, the incarnation, the sufferings, death, resurrection, and intercessions of Christ—of the mission and influences of the Holy Spirit; of the calling of prophets and apostles; of the inspiration and preservation of the Scriptures; of the organization and perpetuity of the church; of all the disciplinary dispensations of divine Providence; and, in a word, of all things pertaining to the salvation of sinners, and the glory of God thereby. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ: according as he

hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. "And we know, that all things work together for good to them that love God—to them that are the called according to his purpose." (Eph. i: 3, 4. 1 Cor. iii: 22, 23. Rom. viii. 28.)

THIRDLY. *In executing the covenant of redemption, the Son sustained the office of Prophet, Priest and King.*

(1) *He was a Prophet.* In the fall, man lost the knowledge of God; and the world by wisdom was unable to regain it. It devolved upon him, who came down from heaven, to unfold the mysteries of the divine character and the divine will. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father he hath declared him." "To this end, said he, was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth:" and "my doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John i: 18, *ib.* xviii: 37, *ib.* vii. 16, 17.)

(2) *He was a Priest.* In the fall, man became a condemned sinner, and all the righteousness and penance in the world, had been insufficient to take away one sin, or to restore one soul to

the lost favor of his God. It devolved alone upon him, of whom it is said, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec," to bring in everlasting righteousness and make a full end of sin. "Every priest of the law, standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. But this man, Jesus, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God. For by one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Wherefore, he is able, also, to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Heb. x: 11–14, *ib.* vii: 25.)

(3) *He is a King.* In the fall, man arrayed against himself a host of inveterate enemies to oppose his salvation: and no created arm could have wrought his deliverance. "But thanks be to God, who hath given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The law reared its adamantine wails to heaven, and shot forth flames of consuming wrath upon every guilty son of Adam's race. The Son of God—the Prince of Peace—hath broken the power of the law, and redeemed us from its curse. The multiform powers of the world, and the insidious motions of sin that war in our members, would re-subjugate the soul to bondage and to death, but "the King of kings" "hath redeemed us from this present evil world," that "sin should not have dominion over us." "The Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about

seeking whom he may devour:" but "the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father—when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." "He is the head over all things to the church." (1 Cor. xv: 24, 25. Eph. i: 22.)

LESSON XXVII.

CHRIST THE DIVINITY OF.

QUESTION. Do you consider Jesus Christ—the Son of God—to be a divine person?

ANSWER. Yes: Jesus Christ is God over all, blessed for ever: he is the true God, and the mighty God. Rom. ix: 5. 1 John v: 20. Is. ix: 6, *ib.* liv: 5. John xx: 28. Acts xx: 28. Heb. i: 8.

Q. Is he not also called the Lord of all things?

A. Yes. He is Lord of all, both of the dead and living. Acts x: 36. Rom. xiv: 9. Jer. xxiii: 6. Luke ii: 11. John xiii: 13. Acts ii: 36. 1 Cor. xv: 47. Eph. iv: 5. Rev. xvii: 14, *ib.* xix: 16.

Q. If, then, he is both Lord and God, has he not all the perfections and attributes of God?

A. Yes: In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. ii: 9. John i: 14, *ib.* x: 30, *ib.* xiv: 9. 1 Cor. i. 24. 2 Cor. iv: 6. Phil. ii: 5, 6. 1 Tim. iii: 16. Heb. i: 3.

Q. You know that eternity and unchangeableness are two of the essential attributes of God: is Jesus Christ eternal and unchangeable?

A. Yes: His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting: and he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Mic. v: 2. Heb. xiii: 18. Pro. viii: 22, 23. John i: 1, *ib.* viii: 58. Col. i: 17. Heb. i: 10–12. Rev. i: 4, 8, 17.

Q. None but God can be every where present at the same time: is not this true of Jesus Christ?

A. Yes: Jesus said, wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I, in the midst of them. Mat. xviii: 20, *ib.* xxviii: 18–20. Eph. i: 23. Col. iii. 11.

Q. God only can know all things: is there any thing that Christ does not know?

A. No: We are sure that he knoweth all things. John xvi: 30. Mat. ix: 4, *ib*, xi: 27. John i: 18, *ib.* ii: 24, 25, *ib.* v: 20, *ib.* vi: 64, *ib.* xx: 27. Col. ii: 3.

Q. It is peculiar to God alone to possess creative power: did not Christ make the world, the heavens and all things?

A. Yes. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. John i: 3, 10. Col. i: 15–17. Heb. i: 3, 4, 10, 12.

Q. None but God is able to raise the dead: is not this power, also possessed by Jesus Christ?

A. Yes. The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. John v. 28–29. *ib.* vi. 39, 40.

Q. We should worship none but God only; but were not the angels commanded to worship Jesus Christ?

A. Yes. When God bringeth his first begotten Son into the world, he commandeth all the angels of God to worship him. Heb. i. 6. Ps. xcvii. 7, Is. vi. 1, 10, John xii. 36–41. Rev. v. 11–13.

Q. Since then, Jesus Christ is the true God, and has all the perfections of God, and is worshipped and adored by all the angels, should not we, and all men honor and serve him as God?

A. Yes. All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father; he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father that sent him. John v. 23. Ps. ii. 12. Math. xxi. 9 *ib.* xxviii. 9. Luke xxiv. 52. Acts vii. 59. *ib.* xxii. 16. Phil. ii. 9–11, 19. *ib.* iii. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. i. 5, 6.

REMARKS.

Divine titles, divine attributes, divine works and divine worship are, in the Scriptures, appropriated to Jesus Christ. This were absolutely incredible upon any other supposition, than that of his real divinity. That he is a divine person results in like manner, also, from the following considerations:

First. *His Sonship.* In more than an hundred instances, Jesus Christ is stated in the Scriptures to be the Son of God, and in very many of them he was so stated by himself. In this character all men are required to believe on him; and he is emphatically declared to be "antichrist," who denies the relation of the Father and the Son. (1 John ii: 22.) It is abundantly evident, that both Jews and Christians understood this relation to import his real divinity. Hence the latter carefully distinguished his divine Sonship from his humanity; (Rom. i: 3, 4) and hence the former charged him with blasphemy on account of this appellation—saying, thereby "he made himself equal with God." (John v: 18.) Nor is it less certain, than, that while Jesus himself was not

ignorant, that all parties so construed this phrase, he never pretended, at any time, to remove the universal impression on this subject. So far from this, he unequivocally asserted, "I and my Father are one;" and he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." (John x: 30, *ib.* xiv: 9.) Granting, therefore, what the adversaries of this doctrine allow, that "he was a good man," nay, that "he was the best of men," and an infallible witness to the truth," how is it possible to reconcile his conduct on this occasion with any other supposition, than that of his real divinity? He that by his own words creates a false impression, and knowingly permits it to remain, is, to all intents and purposes, guilty of falsehood. And hence one of two things inevitably results, either Christ was not so much as a good man, (which all admit he was) or else he was more—he was also a divine person.

Secondly. *His Miracles.* The history of Jesus Christ is a history of miracles. From the first day of his public ministry, to that of his ascension to the upper sanctuary—"there to appear in the presence of God for us"—comparatively little else appears in his life, than one unbroken chain of the most extraordinary and wonderful works—opening the eyes of the blind; unstopping the ears of the deaf; cleansing the leprous; healing the sick; casting out devils and raising the dead. In no scene of personal agony or distress, was he ever wanting a heart to pity or a hand to relieve. Whether in the bonds of an ac-

cused, going up to the hall of judgment, he could heal the wounds of a Malchus; or whether he hung an execrated victim amid the tortures of the cross, he could pardon and console a dying thief. Nor is this all. *His miracles were peculiarly his own.* In two respects, at least, they were not less distinguished from those of his apostles, than were these latter, from the incantations and necromancies of the Egyptian Magi. The apostles were neither the object nor the origin of that miraculous power, "by which the Gentiles were made obedient to the faith." They every where preached, that men should believe on Christ Jesus the Lord; and they everywhere acknowledged him the almighty source of their "signs, and wonders, and divers miracles. (Acts iii: 12–16, *ib.* xv: 12, *ib.* xix: 11. Rom. i. 5, *ib.* xv: 18, 19.) In this there was harmony and fitness. It was proper that he should receive the honor, whose mighty power had effected such deeds of passing grandeur. But what was the character of his own ministry? Did he, in like manner, direct our faith to another, by whom his miracles were wrought? No verily. He was the end of his own gospel, as he was afterwards that of his apostles; and he challenges the faith of all upon the ground of his self-effected wonders. "If I do not the works of my Father, said he, then believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." "Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in

me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. (John x. 37, 38. *ib.* xiv. 11.) His works were his own; and therefore he was the object for which they were wrought—his works were above the power of impotent humanity; and therefore showed him to be the true God.

THIRDLY. *His Mediation.* We have already hinted, and it will be seen more fully hereafter, that the great design of Christ's advent into the world, was to effect a mediation in behalf of sinful men, by offering, in his own person, a satisfaction to the divine justice, in consideration of which, God might be just and the justifier of every one that believeth in Jesus. The accomplishment of this design, necessarily supposes him to have been a divine person. For whether we consider the requisite satisfaction to proceed upon the principle of pecuniary transactions, in which only an excess of merit is applied to the extinguishment of human liabilities; or whether we consider, (what is the fact,) that it proceeds upon the principle of moral transactions, in which the dignity of one person is the ground upon which another is released, it must appear obvious that it could have been rendered by no mere creature. On the former supposition, this was impossible; because, no mere creature can possess excess of merit; and upon the latter supposition. it was equally impossible, because, no one creature can possess pre-eminent dignity. In the estimation of the law, all creatures are alike—subjects and bondsmen. Hence, it was with peculiar propri-

ty that the apostle intimates, that he who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, was himself above the law, but, for the purpose of our redemption, condescended to be "made under the law." And hence, also, he emphatically declares, that he who condescended to take upon himself the form of a servant, and become obedient unto the death of the cross, was originally in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God. (Gal. iv. 4, 5. Phil. ii. 6–8.)

LESSON XXVIII.

CHRIST—THE HUMANITY OF.

Q. You said, in the last lesson, that Jesus Christ was the true God; did he not, also, assume a human nature like unto our own?

A. Yes. He who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Phil. ii. 6, 7. Luke xxiv. 39. John i. 14, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. ii. 11–16. *ib.* xx. 5, 1 John i. 1–3. *ib.* iv. 3: 2 John vii.

Q. Was Jesus, in his human nature, subject to all the weaknesses and infirmities of other men?

A. Yes. He was born in a manger, a feeble and helpless infant; increased in wisdom and stature; labored and became weary; hungered, thirsted, and fasted; suffered, died, and was buried, like other men. Math. i. 18–25. Luke ii. 6, 7, 52. Math. xiv. 55. Luke ii. 51. John iv. 6. Math. iv. 2, *ib.* xxiv. 18. John iv. 7. *ib.* xix. 28. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Math. xxvii. 57–60. 1 Cor. xv. 4.

Q. What evidence have you that Christ also possessed a human soul?

A. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: he groaned in the spirit; and said my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Is. liii. 3. John xi. 33–35. Math. xxvi. 38. Mark iii. 5. John xii. 27. *ib.* xxiii. 21.

Q. For what object did Christ come into the world, and take upon him our nature?

It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15. Math. i. 21. Luke xix. 10. John iii. 17. *ib.* xii. 47. Acts xvi. 31. Rom. v. 9. 10. *ib.* x. 9. 9 Tit. i. 4. 1 John iv. 14.

Q. Why was it necessary, that in all points, Jesus Christ should be made like unto men?

A. It behooved him, in all things, to be made like unto men, that he might be a merciful and

faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Heb. ii. 17, 18. *ib.* iv. 15. *ib.* v. 1, 2. *ib.* viii. *ib.* viii. 3. *ib.* 10. 4.

Q. Was Christ, in his human nature, subject to the divine law?

A. Yes. Jesus said, think not, that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy; but to fulfil. Math. v. 17, 18. Ps. xxxx. 7, 8. Is. xxxxii. 21. Rom. iii. 31. *ib.* x. 4.

Q. You said, on a former occasion, that the law required supreme love to God, and love to all men as to ourself: what can you say of the piety of Jesus Christ towards his Father?

A. Jesus prayed much to his Father; in all things he glorified and honored him; and always did those things that pleased him. Mark i. 35. Luke v. 16, 18, 28, 29. *ib.* xxii. 44. John iv. 34. *ib.* viii. 29, 49, *ib.* xvii. 4. Heb. v. 7.

Q. What can you say of his good-will towards men?

A. Jesus had compassion on the multitudes when he beheld their distresses; and he went about continually doing good. Math. ix. 36. Acts x. 38.

Q. Why was it necessary that the Lord Jesus should thus have been made under the law, and fulfil it in his own person?

A. He was made under the law, that he might redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. iv. 4, 5. Rom. iii. 20, 26. *ib.* viii. 3, 4. Gal. iii. 13.

Q. Could Christ, acting in the character of our High Priest, have atoned for sins, if he had not been holy?

A. No. For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled—separate from sinners; who needeth not daily to offer up sacrifice, first, for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. Heb. vii. 26, 27. *ib.* iv. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 22. 1 John ii. *ib.* iii. 5.

Q. Could he, viewed in the light of a sacrifice, have atoned for our sins, if he had not been holy in the sight of the law?

A. No. It is the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, that purges our consciences fromdead works to serve the living God. Heb. ix. 14. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. i. 19.

REMARKS.

The christian era is dated from the advent of Christ. With our present means of information,

it were impossible to determine, at this late period of time, the precise day, or month of the year, in which this extraordinary event took place. Nevertheless, we may do so within a few months: and this is sufficient for all ordinary and valuable purposes. We know, that our Lord was born into the world before the death of Herod, by whom he was persecuted while yet he was an infant: Now, Josephus tells us, that during the last illness of Herod there occurred an eclipse of the moon; and by reference to Ferguson's astronomical tables it will be found, that the only lunar eclipse that occurred within several years of Herod's death occurred, according to our computation, on the 13th of March, in the year of the world 4001. Since, therefore, Christ was but an infant when Herod died, his advent must be dated near the beginning of this, or the end of the preceeding year. This the apostle calls "the fullness of time." (Gal. iv. 4.) and we remark,

First. *The incarnation of Christ was a fulfilment of prophecy.* Jesus Christ was no ordinary personage; and the object of his terrene mission, was one of no ordinary character. Accordingly every thing connected with this event, received the impress of the divine spirit, generations before. It was not a mere casualty, that he was miraculously conceived of a Virgin, and made his advent into the world ere the "sceptre," the "ephod," and the teraphim, had departed from the house of Jacob. It was not accidental, that he was born of the tribe of Judah, and of the fam-

ily of David—that he was despised while an infant, and persecuted in his subsequent life. The time and place of his nativity; the manner of his life, and the circumstances attendant upon the days of his humanity; the reproach and contumely to which he was subjected, his miracles, and the uprightness of his character—all these had been the burden of the prophets, who spake as the spirit gave them utterance," with the precision and accuracy of history. (Gen. xlix. 10. Is. vii. 14. *ib.* liii. 2, 3, Mic. v. 2. Hag. ii. 7, 9. Mat. ii. 13, 15. *ib.* xiii. 54–57. Luke i. 26–35. *ib.* ii. 1–7, 52. John i. 11. *ib.* vii. 42. Rom. i. 3. Heb. vii. 14.)

Secondly. *In his human nature, Christ exemplified every mortal virtue.* He was the light of the world, in whom there was no darkness. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Whether we consider his piety, as it respected his divine Father, or as it related to those inferior beings whose nature he had assumed, it was perfect in all its parts, and pre-eminent in all its degrees. Sent into the world on an errand of love, it was his "meat and his drink to do the will of him that sent him." Performing the most extraordinary miracles, and amid the most overwhelming embarrassments of poverty and persecution, he was neither the subject of ostentatious pride, nor of desponding unbelief. He spake with authority, and as never man had spoken; but he neither compromitted the truth, nor gave that which was holy unto dogs. His

words and his works were never with-held where they could accomplish good; nor were they ever granted merely to gratify an idle curiosity, or a vain presumption. Mercy was the essential element of his character; and he was lavish of her bounties. He was the poor man's friend, the orphan's father, and the widow's husband: His eye wept with those who wept, and his heart rejoiced with those who did rejoice. He was happy in every man's happiness, and he shared in every man's sorrows. Into all the circumstances of life he entered, alike free from austerity and frivolity. His soul was generous, and his manners condescending, courteous and bland. He gave honor where it was due, and compassion where it was needed. In every place, meekness, patience and humility—gentleness, amiability and love; sincerity, truth and uprightness were the features strongly delineated in his moral character. An infuriated populace, narrowly surveying his conduct, with eyes full of malice and envy, and calling to their aid a horde of false witnesses, were unable to substantiate a solitary blemish in his life. And the divine pre-science itself was "well pleased for his righteousness sake"—saying "he will fulfil the law and make it honorable." (Is. xxxxii. 21.)

Thirdly. *The humanity of Christ eminently befitted him for the priestly office.* The great distinguishing pre-requisites for the priesthood, were an appointment to the office, natural sympathies, arising out of personal experience, and a suitable

offering for sacrifice: (Heb. v: 1–6: *ib.* viii: 3:) and whether we consider Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our profession, in the first, second or third of these several aspects, he presents a striking contrast to the whole order of Levi—the only divinely appointed priesthood, save his own. Who of all the Levitical order was ever so solemnly inducted into office, as was he, of whom it is said, 'The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec?" "Inasmuch as not without an oath he was made a Priest, by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." (Heb. vii. 20, 22.) Who of all the Levitical order entered into human sympathies, as did he, who himself took our infirmities and bare our sickness"—being tempted *in all points* like as we are; yet without sin?" (Math. viii. 17. Heb. iv. 15.) Who of all the Levitical order hath ever presented a sacrifice that could take away sins, as did he, when through the Eternal Spirit, *he offered himself without spot to God*, that he might purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" Heb vx. 14. 1 Pet. i. 19.) The former priesthood was only the shadow; the body is of Christ. That was the type; he is the anti-type. The law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb. vii. 19.)

LESSON XXIX.

CHRIST—THE DEATH OF.

Question. In the last lesson, you said, that Jesus Christ, the true God, became a man, and in his human nature fulfilled the law: did he not then suffer and die?

Answer. Yes. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. ii: 8. Zech. xiii: 7. Luke xxiv. 26, 46. Acts ii. 23. Heb. xii. 2, *ib.* xiii. 12.

Q. If Christ fulfilled the law in his own person, for what did he suffer and die?

A. Christ hath once suffered for sins. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Is. liii. 10.

Q. For whose sins did Christ suffer, since he had none of his own?

A. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. 1 Cor. xv. 3. Ps. lxix. 9. Is. liii. 4–6, 8, 12. Dan. ix. 26. Rom. iv. 25, *ib.* viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, *ib.* viii. 9. Eph. v. 2, 25. Heb. ix. 28. 1 Pet ii. 24. 1 John iii. 5.

Q. Did he come into the world for the express purpose of dying for our sins?

A. Yes. The Son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Mat. xx. 28, *ib.* xxvi. 28. Mark x. 4, 5. Luke xix. 10. John iii. 14, 15, *ib.* x. 11, *ib.* xi. 51, 52, *ib.* xii. 27. Rom. iii. 25. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. xiii. 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. 1 John ii. 2.

Q. Was it the human, or the divine nature of Christ, that suffered and died?

A. Christ suffered for us in the flesh, or in his human nature. 1 Pet. iv. 1. Ps. xxii. 16. Is. liii. 10. Mat. xxvi. 38. John xix. 34, *ib.* xx. 25. Eph. ii. 15. Col. i. 22. Heb. x. 10, 20.

Q. Why was it necessary that Christ should suffer and die, in his human nature particularly?

A. That sin might be condemned in the flesh: and because, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Rom. viii. 3. Heb. ix. 22, *ib.* 2. 14–17.

Q. Would not the blood of any other animal, such as a lamb or a goat, have answered the same purpose?

A. No. It is not possible that the blood of bulls or of goates, should take away sins. Heb.

x, 4. Is. i. 6–14. *ib.* lxvi. 3. Heb. x. 1–3. *ib.* ix. 13.

Q. What was it in the sufferings of Christ, that rendered them a better sacrifice for sins, than the blood of bulls or goats?

A. The dignity of his person, as God manifest in the flesh; the holiness of his character; and the special appointment of his Father, that he should die for sins, rendered the sufferings of Christ a better sacrifice for sin, than the blood of bulls or of goats. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. vii. 26, 7, ib. ix. 14. John vi. 38–40, ib. x. 17, 18. Heb. ix. 23.

Q. Did God the Father absolutely purpose and design to sanctify and save sinners through the death of the human body of Christ?

A. Yes. Jesus said, Lo, I come to do thy will O, God. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Christ once for all. Heb. x. 9, 10. Is. lii. 6, 10: Math. xxvi. 42. Acts ii. 23. Rom. iii. 24, 25. 1 Cor. i. 30. *ib.* vi. 11. Gal. i. 4. Eph. i. 4, 5. 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. Heb. x. 14.

Q. Was it not an instance of extraordinary love in God, that he should give his Son to suffer the pain and ignominy of the cross for our sins?

A. Yes. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to die for our sins. 1 John iv. 10. Rom. v. 8. John iii. 16.

Q. Should we not henceforth glorify and honor him, in view of his great love towards us?

A. Yes. Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Rom. vi: 18. *ib.* xii: 1, 2. 2 Cor. v: 14, 15. Eph. iii. 10, 11. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Heb. ix: 14. 1 Pet. ii. 24, 25. Jude iii: 4. Rev. i: 5, 6.

REMARKS.

It has already been seen, that the incarnation of Christ, was a literal fulfilment of prophecy. The same remark is true, also, of his death. It would seem impossible, that an intelligent person, familiarly acquainted with the facts connected with that most extraordinary and memorable event and carefully comparing them with the prophetic writings, should not be struck with a coincidence so minute as to preclude every supposition, that the one, or the other, was the product of a blind and senseless "chance." The period of his demise; the betrayer; the price of his betrayal; the subsequent appropriation of that price; the conduct of his disciples on the occasion; the injustice attending his trial; the various forms of indignity

to which he was subjected; the character and form of his death; the persons among whom he died, and was buried—all these, and more, had been foretold—ages past—with the most astonishing precision and accuracy. (Dan. ix: 26. Ps. xli: 9. Zech. xi: 12, 13. *ib.* xiii: 7. Is. l: 5. *ib.* v: 3, 8, 9. Ps. xxii 12–19. *ib.* lxix: 20, 21.) Nor was this all. We remark farther.

First. *The death of Christ was a fulfilment of the ceremonial law.* The ceremonial law of the Jews—that great system of substitutionary sacrifice and sufferings—was not designed to be perpetual. Viewed in its best light, it was a scheme of mercy too narrow for the enlarged dominions of God's grace. "Is he a God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." Hence the depreciating style in which it was mentioned by the prophets. (1 Sam. xv: 22. Ps. l: 7–14. *ib.* li: 16, 17. *ib.* i: 6–14. *ib.* lxvi: 3,) hence, also the frequent allusion to a new and better covenant by which it should be superseded. (Jer. xxxi: 31–34. *ib.* xxxii: 36–41. *ib.* xxxiii: 14–16. Ezek. xxxviii: 24–36. Heb. viii: 7–13.) Its insufficiency to render the comers thereunto perfect—this was the great argument of the apostle. "There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect." (Heb. vii: 18, 19.) Nevertheless, the law had its uses. It served to keep alive the remembrance of those sins, which it could not take away; and to point the minds of its votaries to the lamb

of God—the great propitiatory sacrifice for sins, which should be offered up in the end of the Jewish world. "The law was our school-master to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." (Gal. iii: 24. Rom. x: 4.)

Secondly. *The death of Christ, was an instance of most extraordinary sufferings.* We allude now, not so much to the character and design of his sufferings, as to their intensity: and we dare assert, that such untold agonies, never rolled their awful weight upon any other soul, in the present world, as those under which he groaned, and bled, and died. This might be inferred from the unusually short period ere his mortal life sank beneath them. (Mark xv: 44, 45.) But it will appear more palpable if we consider the manner in which he met death. No other being ever brought so much to the close of life to console and strengthen him, amid the last struggles of dissolving nature as did he; and yet, no other being ever seemed so deeply overwhelmed at the prospect of death as he was. He died voluntarily, and under the promptings of his own abounding love. He died innocently, and with a perfect consciousness of the justness of his cause. He died with a full clear, and decided conviction of immortality and a future state. He died under a complete and absolute assurance, that no sooner should the fatal work of death be done, than he should be rewarded with glory, honor and bliss, in the bosom of his

Father. Under such circumstances, how does it seem, he should have met death? Did he meet it, even as ordinary martyrs and good men have died? No verily. No one ever appeared to be so deeply affected at the thought of death, as was he. "Recollect in what strong terms the sacred writers represent his awful conflict in the garden of Gethsemane. They tell us of his mortal sorrow: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." They speak of his agony: "And being in agony he prayed." They speak of his fears: He was heard in that he feared. They speak of his cries and tears. "He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." They speak of the prodigious effect, which the fear of death produced upon his body: He sweat, as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. They even speak of his desire to draw back; "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Nor yet is this all. They represent him as reduced to the lowest ebb of resolution, and crying "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Was ever mortal agony like this. "His visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. (Is. xlii: 14.)

THIRDLY. *The death of Christ was vicarious.* This must appear the only rational solution, that can be given to the mystery of his extraordinarily intense sufferings. It were incredible, that he should have met the closing scene of life, as we have described, if his death had only been that of

an ordinary martyr, or an example of patience and submission. The same also, is implied in the fact, that he was the fulfilment of the ceremonial law. What did the Jews expect from the endless ceremonies and observances of their law? Did they not look for a literal expiation of sins by the blood of their immolated lambs, and bulls and goats? And when the apostle taught them to seek for that in the blood of Christ, which they had vainly hoped to find in the blood of bulls and goats, he evidently intended them to understand, a literal abolishment of sins. Hence, also, the multitudinous passages of scripture where it is said: "Christ hath suffered for our sins"—"he hath borne our sins in his own body on the tree"—"he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities"—"he hath suffered the just for the unjust"—"he is the propitiation for our sins"—"he hath died for all"—"he laid down his life a ransom for many"—"by his stripes we are healed"—"in his blood we have redemption"—"his blood cleanseth from all sin"—"he hath washed us in his blood." But time would fail to mention the half of those phrases which refer to this subject in the most direct form. Upon no other supposition than the vicariousness of his death, can we account for the fact, that this was the burden of the songs, the prayers, the ministry, the hopes, the joys, the exultation and raptures of all the apostles and early christians. They gloried in nought but his cross, for this they sacrificed all, and esteemed them but filth; and looking

to this they exclaimed, "thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

LESSON XXX.

CHRIST—THE RESURRECTION OF.

QUESTION, The subject of our last lesson, was the death of Christ. What became of Christ, after he had been taken, and with wicked hands crucified and slain?

A. He was buried; and on the third day he rose again according to the scriptures. 1 Cor. xv: 4. Ps. ii: 7. *ib.* xvi: 10. Hos. vi: 2. Math. xii: 39, 40. *ib.* xvi: 20. *ib.* xvii: 22, 23. *ib.* xx: 18, 19. Luke xxiv: 46. John ii: 19. Acts ii: 31. *ib.* xiii: 33–35. *ib.* xxvi. 22, 23. 1 Pet. i: 10, 11.

Q. Did Christ rise from the dead by his own power, or was he raised up by the power of the Father.

A. Christ was raised up from the dead by the glorious power of the Father. Rom. vi: 4. Acts ii: 24, 32, *ib.* iii: 15. *ib.* x: 4. 1 Cor. xv: 15. Rom. x: 9. Eph. i: 20. Col. ii: 12. Heb. xiii: 20. 1 Pet. i: 21.

Q. By whom was the resurrection of Christ first proclaimed?

A. The resurrection of Christ was first proclaimed by an angel of the Lord to Salome and Mary, the mother of James; and after that by two angels to Joanna and other pious women with her. Mat. xxviii: 5–8. Luke xxiv: 1–9. Mark xvi: 5, 6.

Q. To whom did Christ first show himself alive after his resurrection?

A. Christ appeared first to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre; then to the other Mary and Salome, as they were returning to the city: he was next seen by Simon, and on the same day, he appeared to two others, in their way to Emmaus. Mark xvi: 9. Math. xxviii: 9. Luke xxiv: 34. *ib.* xxiv: 13–26.

Q. When these pious women, a part of whom had seen the Lord, had assembled the eleven apostles, and reported to them what they had seen and heard, how were their words received?

A. Their words seemed to the eleven as idle tales, and they believed them not. Luke xxiv. 11.

Q. Did not Christ after this himself appear to the eleven apostles?

A. Yes, The same day, at evening, he appear-

ed unto the eleven, as they sat at meat; and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart; because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. John xx. 19. Mark xvi: 14.

Q. It seems, that the apostles did not so much doubt that something had been seen; but thought it was rather a spirit: How did Christ at length convince Thomas and the other disciples, that what had been seen was not a spirit; but his real body which had been crucified?

A. He showed them his hands and his side: and said behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. John xx: 20, 27. Luke xxiv: 39.

Q. What were the feelings of the disciples when they saw clearly, that Christ was actually risen from the dead?

A. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. John xx: 20, 28. Luke xxiv: 40, 41.

Q. How long did Christ remain on earth with his disciples, affording additional evidences of his resurrection, and speaking to them of his kingdom?

A. He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Acts i: 3. *ib.* xiii: 31.

Q: What was the greatest number of persons who, all at one time, ever saw Christ, after that he was raised from the dead?

A. He was, at one time, seen by above five hundred brethren. 1 Cor. xv: 6.

Q. Have you any other evidence, that God raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, besides the simple testimony of his disciples?

A. Yes. The disciples were witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. Acts v: 32. John vii: 39. *ib.* xvi: 7. Acts x: 44, 47. Rom. viii: 10–16. 1 Cor. xv: 14–17. Gal. iii: 2–5. Eph. i: 15–20. *ib.* ii: 4, 5.

Q. Were not the apostles endowed with the power of working miracles, in proof of the resurrection of Christ?

A. Yes. With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of Christ. Acts iv. 33. Luke xxiv: 49. Acts i: 8, *ib.* ii. 32, 32, *ib:* iii. 12–16, *ib.* iv. 8–10.

Q. For what special purpose was Christ raised from the dead?

A. He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Rom. iv: 25, *ib.* viii: 34. Heb. iv: 14, *ib.* vi: 20, *ib.* vii. 25, *ib.* ix: 24. 1 John ii: 1.

REMARKS.

If there is any one doctrine of the Christian Scriptures, to which a paramount importance is to be attached, it is the resurrection of Christ. Upon this one event, more than all others, we are taught, he rested the issue of his Messiah-ship; (Mat. xii: 38–40, *ib.* xvi: 20, with Mark ix: 9. Rom. i: 4, with Acts xiii: 35, 36.) Upon this, also, depends the virtue and efficacy of his death, (Rom. iv: 25, *ib.* x: 9. 1 Cor. xv. 17. Heb. ix: 12) the certainty of a blissfull resurrection, (1 Cor. xv: 13, 18) the general judgment, (John v: 22, 23. Acts xvii: 31) and the ultimate salvation of the righteous. (1 Pet. i: 3, 4.) All these cardinal doctrines must stand or fall with this one—the resurrection of Jesus Christ: and with whatever degree of doubt we hold this latter, the same must attend the former. For this reason we ask attention to,

First. *The history of the resurrection of Christ.* It appears, from a careful comparison of the four Evangelists, that a number of pious females, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, Salome, Joanna and others, had made arrangements to meet at the grave of Christ, early on the morning of the third

day, and annoint his body. Accordingly, when the appointed period drew near, "while it was yet dark," and "beginning to dawn towards the first day of the week," the two Marys and Salome sat out to take a view of the sepulchre :" at which they arrived, Mary Magdalene first, "about the rising of the sun." (John xx: 1. Mat. xxviii. 1. Mark xvi: 1, 2.) When they had reached the point of their destination, they found, to their great astonishment, that the keepers were fled, and that the stone was rolled away from the door of the grave. Upon this, Mary Magdalene, leaving her companions to await the arrival of Joanna, hastened away to call for Peter and John. (John xx: 2.) She had, however, scarcely gone, before an angel of the Lord appeared to the other Mary and Salome, informing them, that "Christ whom they sought was actually risen from the dead, and that his disciples would go into Galilee, and there should they see him." With this intelligence, "they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, to bring his disciples word." (Mat. xxviii: 2–8.) Shortly after their departure, Joanna arrived with her company. These "enteredin to the sepulchre ;" and at first, they saw nothing, but as they stood in great perplexity of mind, on account of the absence of the body of their Lord, there appeared in their midst *two* angels, which addressed them in the same manner, as the *one* angel had addressed the other women : and in like manner these left. (Luke xxiv: 1–8.) Next came Peter and John, whom

Mary Magdalene had gone to call. They also went in, but remarking nothing, save the burial cloths carefully laid one side, they departed. (John xx: 3–10.) Mary, however, did not depart with these disciples, but remained without weeping. And as she wept, she stooped down, and looking in, she beheld two angels, which said unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She replied, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Jesus himself heard this tender and affectionate reply; and immediately honored her with the first view of his risen body. (John xx: 11–16). (Mark xvi. 9.) His next appearance was to the other Mary and Salome, as they were returning to the city. (Mat. xxviii: 9, 10.) It was, perhaps, near midday, when these pious women, a part of whom had now seen the Lord; and the rest, a vision of angels, which told them that he was alive, at length assembled the apostles, to whom they told what they had seen and heard. But "their words seemed unto the eleven as idle tales, and they believed them not." (Luke xxiv: 10, 11.) Nevertheless, Peter concluded, that he would go again, and make a second examination into this matter. On this occasion, he did not "enter in," as before; but simply stooped down and looked in, and "departed, wondering in himself at that which had come to pass." (Luke xxiv. 12.) It was probably, soon after this, that the Lord also appeared to Simon. (Luke xxiv: 34.) Later in the after-

noon, he again made himself known to Cleopas and his companion, in their way to Emmaus: (Luke xxiv: 13–26) and in the evening of the same day, he also appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided their unbelief; which had rejected the testimony of those who had seen him. (John xx: 19. Mark xvi. 14.) After this, he sojourned with his disciples forty days, affording them the most incontestable evidences of his resurrection, and speaking of things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Acts i: 3.)

SECONDLY. *The evidence of Christ's resurrection.* The resurrection of Christ, admits of three kinds of evidence: presumptive, testimonial, and demonstrative.

(1) *Presumptive.* It is universally conceded, that Christ was crucified and buried; and that three days after, he was not in the grave. Now, he was taken away, neither by his enemies nor by his friends. Not by his enemies: for they were alike unwilling that he should be removed; (Mat. xxvii: 62–66) and unable to produce his body, when, by the preaching of the resurrection, they admitted the charge of his innocent blood. (Acts v. 28.) On the contrary, his friends were equally destitute of a motive, and of power to have taken him away. They could have had no motive for such an act, except upon the supposition of his real Messiahship; and of this, his resurrection, (and not his removal) was to be the test. If, however, they had desired to remove him, it is evident, that it had been impossible

while the guard were awake; and that the whole guard should have been asleep at once, were not less difficult to conceive, than the resurrection itself. Accordingly, on the one hand, the disciples were as greatly surprised by his absence from the grave, as could have been his enemies; and, on the other, they were never charged with his removal, until after the guard had been richly paid to make such charge. (Mat. xxviii: 11–15.) If, then, Christ was crucified and buried; and three days after was not in the grave; and if he was removed, neither by his friends nor his enemies, the presumption is irresistible, that he rose from the dead according to the Scriptures.

(2) *Testimonial.* The resurrection of Christ was first proclaimed by the angels of the Lord. After that he was seen by Mary Magdalene; then by the other Mary and Salome; then by Simon; then by Cleopas and his companion, then by the eleven; then by above five hundred brethren at once; then by James; then by all the apostles; and last of all by St. Paul. Mark xvi: 9. Mat. xxviii: 9. Luke xxiv: 34, 13–26. Mark xvi: 12, 14. 1 Cor. xv: 5–8. Now, if with any degree of candor, we consider the number of these witnesses—the plain matters of fact which they depose—the abundant opportunity they possessed (some of them for forty days) of ascertaining the reality of those facts—the places where they asserted them, and all the marks of sincerity and truth with which their attestations were characterized, it will seem impossible to deny, to both

their testimony, and to the resurrection, the highest degree of credibility. We dare assert, that no man living would think of doubting his title to any worldly possession, established upon one-twentieth part of such testimony.

(3) *Demonstrative.* Under this head, we instance the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost—the miraculous endowment of the apostles, and their capacity to endow others with miraculous powers. It has been already stated, that the influences of the divine Spirit were promised to the disciples of the Messiah in the covenant of redemption. Is. xliv: 3, 4. Joel ii: 28. But whether Jesus was that Messiah—this was the question to be determined: and the final issue of this question, he rested mainly upon the point of his resurrection and ascension to the Father. Accordingly, he assured his disciples, that unless he went unto the Father, the Holy Spirit would not descend upon *them in the character of his disciples:* but, that if he went unto the Father, he would send the Spirit upon them. John vii: 39, *ib.* xvi: 7. When, therefore, the apostles witnessed the wonderful effusion and power of the Holy Ghost upon those who believed in Jesus as the Son of God, they, with singular propriety, adduced from thence a demonstration of two points —both the true Messiahship of Christ, and his rerection and ascension to the right hand of God. Acts ii: 32, 33, *ib.* v: 32, *ib.* x: 44–47. Rom. i: 4. And, in like manner, while it is admitted that the miraculous measure of the Spirit was not design-

ed to be perpetual in the world, yet, wherever there shall be found—to the latest ages of time—a Christian "quickened," "renewed," "comforted," and "sealed" by the effectual operation of the Holy Spirit, there will stand a like demonstration of the resurrection and assension of Christ, as the true Messiah. "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness within himself." "For after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." 1 Cor. xv: 17. 1 John v: 10. Eph. i: 13.

LESSON XXXI.

THE ATONEMENT.

QUESTION. What do you understand by the atonement?

ANSWER. The atonement is that redemption price, on account of which God pardons sinners, and deals with them as though they had not sinned. Rom. iii: 24–26, *ib.* v: 10, 11. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Gal. iii: 13. Heb. ii: 10. 1 John iv: 10, 11.

Q. According to the ceremonial law given to the Jews, as a "type," or "pattern of things in the Heavens," none but a priest could make atonement for sins; and this he did, by offering

the blood of a suitable sacrifice before the Lord, in the Holy place appointed; do not the scriptures represent Jesus Christ, as the great High Priest whose atonement was typified by the Law?

A. Yes. Jesus was made a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Ps. cx. 4. Heb. ii. 17. *ib.* iii. 1. *ib.* iv. 15. *ib.* v: 5, 6. *ib.* vii. 26.

Q. After that Christ rose from the dead, into what place did he enter, and for what purpose?

A. Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. ix. 24. Mark xvi. 19. Luke xxiv. 50, 51. Acts i. 9–11. Rom. iv: 25. *ib.* viii: 34.

Q. With what sacrificial blood, did Christ, as our High Priest, enter into our holy, heavenly place, making intercession on our behalf?

A. Not with the blood of bulls or of goats, which cannot take away sins; but with his own blood, he entered at once, into that holy place, having obtained, (*or procuring*,) eternal redemption for us. Heb. ix. 12. *ib.* x: 4.

Q. Is the blood of Jesus Christ, thus presented before God the Father, the great redemption price on account of which, our sins are pardoned?

A. Yes. In Christ we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. Luke xxiv. 46. Math. xxvi. 28. Acts v. 31. *ib.* xiv. 38, 39. *ib.* xx. 28. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. 9: 14. 1 Pet. i: 18, 19. 1 John ii. 1, 2. Rev. i. 5. *ib.* v. 9.

Q. Does the blood of Jesus Christ restore us to the same place in the divine estimation, which we had held, if we had never sinned?

A. Yes. There is now, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus: for the law of the spirit of life in Christ, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Rom. viii. 1, 2. Math. iii. 17. John vi. 40. Rom. i. 16. *ib.* v. 1, 2. Gal. iv. 4–6. 1 John i. 3, 4.

Q. For whom does the atoning blood of Christ thus avail?

A. The blood of Christ avails for all who believe on him: for he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. vii. 25, John iii. 14–16, *ib.* vi. 29. *ib.* xi. 25, 26. Acts x. 43. *ib.* xiii. 39. *ib.* xvi. 31. Rom. iii. 22. *ib.* x. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. Heb. iii. 14.

Q. Can *we* become, personally, and savingly interested in the atoning blood of Christ, in any other way than by faith?

A. No. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John iii. 36. Mark xvi. 16. John viii. 24.

Q. Are there any so degraded and polluted by sin and wickedness, that the rich and efficacious blood of Christ will not cleanse and save them, if they believe on him?

A. No. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. For the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin. Is. i. 18. 1 John i. 7. Zech. xiii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Heb. viiii. 14. Rev. vii. 14.

Q. In extending pardon and salvation to sinners, does God, in any-wise respect their previous character; or does he save them solely for Christ's sake?

A. He saves them solely for Christ's sake: not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2 Tim. i. 9. Rom. 3. 24, 25. *ib.* iv. 4–8. Gal. ii. 16. *ib.* v. 1–6, Tit. iii. 4–7.

Q. Is not this good news of gospel grace to be offered to all men freely—without regard to

sex, to nation, to color, to condition in life, or to any thing else?

A. Yes. The spirit and the bride say, *come*. And let him that heareth say, *come*. And let him that is a thirst *come*. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17. Ps. ii. 8. Is. ix. 6, 7. *ib.* xxxxv: 22. *ib.* lv. 1–7. Math. xi. 28–30. *ib.* xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Luke ii. 14, 29, 32. *ib.* xxiv. 46, 47. Acts x. 34–43. Rom. iii. 28, 31. Gal. iii. 28. Eph. i. 10.

REMARKS.

It has already been observed that the sufferings of Christ were vicarious. Nevertheless, as under the ceremonial law, it was not the killing of the sacrifice that constituted the atonement, but the presentation of the blood of the immolated animal in the appointed place, and by the proper person: so, it was not the mere sufferings of Christ, but his priestly intercessions, pleading the merits of his own precious blood before the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, that effects the atonement for the sins of men. Hence the importance attached to his resurrection, and intercessions: Rom. iv: 25. 1 Cor. xv. 17. Heb. vii: 25, and hence the frequent occurrence of the phrases like the following: "In whom we have redemption through his blood."—"He hath redeemed us with

his blood."—"The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." These phrases, not only import the absoluteness of the atonement, but they also denote that, with which it is affected: *It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.*" Lev. xvii. 11. Heb. ix: 22. But we remark,

First. *The atonement is universal.*

(1) *As to its necessity.* Whether we consider mankind in the aggregate, as an unite; or individually, as parts of a great whole, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God:" and in consequence thereof, exist under a wide-spread and universal curse. Nor has man the capacity, by any efforts of his own, to purge away that guilt, or obliterate that curse. "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take much soap, yet, thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord." Jer. ii. 22. Mic. vi: 6, 7. Is. lxvi. 3. Heb. x. 4, 6.

(2) *As to its sufficiency.* The atonement is a moral transaction, in which the dignity of one person becomes the ground upon which another is released: and it must appear obvious, that if the dignity of Christ, as our substitute, was such as to render God just in extending pardon and salvation in any case, it must be such as to justify him in the bestowment of like blessings in every case: unless the pardon of a sinner for Christs' sake, does in some wise render him less a divine person. "That which was equally necessary for one as for all, must be equally sufficient for all as for

one." Accordingly, when the abstract idea of the atonement is considered, the sacred writers set forth but one sentiment—they recognize no limits within the circumference of the "world." "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

(3) *As to its freeness.* As the atonement is sufficient for all; so its blessings are freely offered to all, and offered to all freely. The middle wall of partition between the divers nations and families of the earth, was broken down in Christ; and now, the rich, spontaneous, and redundant grace of God, that bringeth salvation, like an ever swelling tide, rolls its healing waters to every man's door, and invites him to "wash and be clean." Mercy's free bounty, "is found of them that sought her not, and is manifest to them that asked not after her." Nor are these blessings peddled out in consideration of any wordly accident. "Without money and without price," is the condition upon which all are pressed to receive them. "Preach the gospel to every creature," was the Savour's last commission. "Freely ye have received, freely give:" this was his first command. Mark xvi: 15. Math. x; 8.

SECONDLY. *The atonement is restricted.*

(1) *In its design.* It is supposed, of course, that no one will understand the last preceeding remark, as having reference to any beyond the human race. We doubt not, the same valuable consideration, on account of which God does con-

sistently pardon any one sinner, would equally render him just in pardoning others also. But, as the holy angels need no atonement, so the death of Christ was not designed to provide an atonement for the fallen angels. The devils themselves seemed to distinctly understand this, when they exclaimed; "What have *we* to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to *torment*" (not to save) "us before the time?" (Math. viii. 29.) And yet, it is still more evident in that "he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham," and was made in the likeness of men. This is the apostles argument to whose words we refer the reader. (Heb. ii. Heb. ii. 11–17.)

(2) *In its saving application.* We beg, that it may be specially remarked, the atonement does not proceed upon a pecuniary principle. That supposition would necessarily involve two antiscriptural results, viz: either, that there is no atonement at all, or all will be saved; and that there is an entire exclusion of grace in the pardon of sin. In that view, sin being considered a literal debt, and the atonement a literal extinquishment of that debt, the sinner might demand his release upon the ground of pecuniary justice, and enter his complaints against the Most High God, if it were not granted him. But the atonement proceeding wholly upon a moral principle, there is the utmost compatibility between the most abundant provisions of grace, and if we may so say, the freest possible exercise of the pardon-

ing franchise on the part of the deity—between the most ample and universal satisfaction for sin, and the most perfect and absolute right to say whom he will forgive. Accordingly, throughout the scriptures we are everywhere taught, that none need expect pardon and salvation, but such as repent of their sins, confess their faults, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

THIRDLY. *The atonement is illustrative.*

(1) *Of the odiousness of sin.* We estimate the character of a disease by the remedy it requires to remove it. Behold in this light how wretchedly hateful and destructive does sin appear, when nought but the atoning blood of Christ could take it away.

(2) *Of the value of the soul.* In like manner, we estimate the worth of things by the price they demand. What then must be the value of that immortal spirit, whose redemption price was nothing less than the life-blood of the only begotton Son of the everlasting God!

(3) *Of the divine character.* "In Christ God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence." (Eph. i. 8.) "*In all wisdom*;" in that he hath strictly maintained and harmonized every perfection of his nature in the atonement. Here justice, truth, righteousness, mercy, pity and love, unite and blend their seemingly discordant features into one full orbed glory. "*In all prudence*"—in that, while he pardons sin, he shows it to be exceedingly hateful—while he annihilates

the past, he binds us to more faithful allegiance in future. "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and wordly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (Tit. ii: 11, 12. 1 John i: 7.)

LESSON XXXII.

FAITH.

QUESTION. "What must I do to be saved"?

ANSWER. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Acts xvi. 31. Heb. ii. 4. John iii. 16. *ib.* vi. 47. *ib.* v. 24. *ib.* x. 9. Acts iv. 12.

Q. What is it to believe on Christ in a saving manner?

A. Saving faith, is to receive Christ as he is set forth in the gospel, and in the affections of the heart to rely on him for salvation from sin and hell. John i. 12. 1 John v. 10. Math. i. 21. Luke ii. 11. Acts v. 31.

Q. Have we any evidence that God will pardon and justify sinners for Christ's sake?

A. Yes. To him gave all the prophets and the law witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall have remission of sins. Acts x. 43. Rom. iii. 21. *ib.* v. 1. Dan. ix. 24. Zech. xiii. 1. Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Rom. viii. 1, 2.

Q. What evidence did Christ himself give, that he was the Son of God, sent into the world to save sinners?

A. He wrought many wonderful works; and these are written, that ye might believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name. John xx. 31. Luke i. 1–4, John iii. 2. *ib.* v. 36. *ib.* vi. 2. *ib.* ix. 16. *ib.* xi. 47, 48. *ib.* xii. 37. Acts ii. 22. *ib.* x. 38.

Q. Did not God the Father bear testimony to Jesus Christ, that he was his Son, and that he approved his mission into the world?

A. Yes. Both at his baptism and on the day of his transfiguration, the Father said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Math. iii. 17. *ib.* xvii. 15. John v. 37. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Rom. i. 4. 1 Pet. i. 16–18.

Q. Is faith simply an assent of the understanding to these evidences concerning Christ, or is it

not also a cordial approval of the things testified?

A. Faith is a hearty approval of the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Rom. x. 9, 10. Acts viii. 37.

Q. Can any man he properly said to believe on Christ, who does not love him, and value him highly?

A. No. For unto them which believe he is precious. 1 Pet. ii. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 7–9.

Q. If you look steadily at any object, the image of that object may be seen on your eye: do not the image and spirit of Christ, in like manner dwell on the hearts of those who believe on him?

A. Yes. Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith. Eph. iii. 17. *ib.* iv. 24. John xiv. 23. *ib.* xvii. 23. Rom. viii. 9, 10, 29. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Heb. xii. 10. 2 Pet. i. 4. 1 John iii. 2.

Q. Will not God the Father, beholding the image of his well beloved Son formed in the heart of the believer, be well pleased with him for his Son's sake?

A. Yes. The Lord is well pleased with us for his righteousness sake. Is. xxxxii. 21. *ib.* liii. 11. *ib.* lxi. 10. Jer. xxiii. Rom. v. 10. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 19–21.

Q. Since then we receive the pardon of sins, righteousness, justification, sanctification, and peace with God, through Jesus Christ, should we not love and rejoice in him?

A. Yes. Whom having not seen we love, and though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. 1 Pet. i. 8. John xxi. 17. Gal. vi. 14. Phil. iii. 3.

Q. How should those live who believe on Christ?

A. The grace of God, that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Rom. vi. 1–4, 22. *ib.* xiii. 13. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 10. Phil. iv. 8. Jas. i. 19–27.

Q. Should we regard any man a true believer who does not live in the continual practice of good works?

A. No. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Jas. ii. 26. Math. v. 13–16. John xiv. 23. *ib.* xv. 2, 8. Gal. iv. 18. *ib.* v. 9, 10. Eph. ii. 10. Tit. iii. 8, 14.

Q. Are the hearts of men naturally inclined to receive Christ, and rely on him for salvation?

A. No. They will not come unto him that they might have life. John v. 49. *ib.* i. 11. *ib.* iii. 19. *ib.* v. 44. *ib.* vi. 44. *ib.* xii. 37. *ib.* xv. 22–25. Rom. x. 3, 4. 1 Cor. i. 18, 23.

Q. What will become of those who obstinately persist in unbelief through life?

A. He that believeth not shall be damned. Mark. xvi: 16. John iii: 36. *ib.* viii. 24. Acts iv. 11, 12. 2 Thes. ii: 11, 12.

Q. How is the native opposition of the heart subdued, so that from unbelievers, men came to believe on Christ?

A. Saving faith is wrought in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, through the word of the gospel. John xvi: 13, 14. Acts xviii: 27. Rom. x: 14–17. 1 Cor. ii: 3–5, 10–15. *ib.* xii. 3, 9. 2 Cor. iii: 18. Gal. v. 22. Eph. i. 13. *ib.* vi. 17. James i: 18. 1 Pet. i: 23.

REMARKS.

"Contend earnestly for the faith;" "build up yourselves in your most holy faith;" "Hymeneus and Alexander made shipwreck of the faith:" (Jude iii. 20. 2 Tim. i: 19, 20.) In these and a few other places, the term, "faith," denotes,

not a principle of godliness in the heart, but scripture truth. In the present lesson, however, we refer to faith as a divine principle, in the soul: and we remark,

First. *The act of faith.* As an act, faith involves two things—the conviction of the understanding, and the cordial approval of the heart to the things signified in the gospel. The *degree* of faith, is the degree of that conviction, and the degree of that approval. The *uniformity* of faith, is the permanency of that conviction, and the stability or unchangeableness of that approval.

Faith is distinguished alike from *disbelief*, and *unbelief*. *Dis*belief is the opposite extreme of faith. It is the understanding and heart inclined away from any given proposition of gospel truth, under the influence of counter testimony, or from a native aversion of the affections and will. The degree and obduracy of disbelief, are as the accumulation of the opposing evidence, and the intensity of the aversions. *Un*belief is a sort of middle ground, between faith and disbelief. It is that condition, in which the affections are, indeed, opposed to God, but in which judgment is not determined, either for, or against christianity. This is the state in which the larger proportion of mankind exist at present. Of them it is literally true, which our Lord said—"they hated me without a cause," or reason. (John xv: 25.)

Secondly. *The pre-requisites to faith.* There are three pre-requisites to faith, either of which being absent, it cannot exist—evidence, attention

and a right state of heart. No man can properly be said to believe that the moon is inhabited; nor yet, can we say that we disbelieve it. Simply because we have no direct evidence that it is, or it not, so. In like-manner, the heathen, who are entirely destitute of all evidence on the subject, can neither be said to believe, nor disbelieve, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. How can they believe one way, or the other, of him of whom they have not heard? On the contrary, there are multitudes in christendom, where light and evidence abound in great measure, who are almost or altogether as undecided on the subject of christianity as are the veriest heathen. They are partisans of no religion whatever; or if they feel some slight partialities on this point, those partialities are, perhaps not so much the result of any investigation, as the effect of certain relations which they sustain to some sect of religionists. Now, all this is not for the want of evidence; but for the want of attention. After all, the depravity of the heart, which, indeed, is the true secret of this inattention to religious matters, has more to do with unbelief, than any one thing: and this leads us to,

THIRDLY. *The author of faith.* In remarking the cause or author of faith, carefully distinguish between the instrument and the agent. The *instrumental* cause of faith is the word of God. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believ-

ed"? "Ye also trusted in Christ after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation." (Rom. x: 17. 1. Cor. iii. 5. Eph. i. 13.) But the *efficient* cause of faith is the Holy Ghost, by whose almighty power the depravity of the heart is subdued. (Tit. iii. 5,) the sublime mysteries of the gospel distinctly understood. (John xvi. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. *ib.* xii. 3,) and all its evidences are made demonstration and power. (1 Cor. ii. 4.) No man can, (or will) come unto me, said Christ, except the Father, which sent me draw him." "Your faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." "Faith is given by the Spirit." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, *faith, &c.* (John vi. 44. 1 Cor. ii: 5. *ib.* iii. 6. *ib.* xii. 9. Gal. v. 25.) It is for this reason, also, the "word" is called "the word of the Spirit," as it is by this instrumentality the enmity of the heart is slain, and man is brought to believe on,

FOURTHLY. *The object of faith.* Words are the signs of our ideas, and the representatives of things. Ideas and things, therefore, have an existence anterior to, and wholly independent of, the words and phrases by which they are expressed. The word "gospel" is used in the divers sense, to denote the whole of scripture; or more definitely, so much of the scriptures as relates directly to Christ: and yet, still more definitely, to denote, not words so much, but things. It represents a

great matter of fact, which has taken place in the universe. That matter of fact is, that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to suffer and die, in order that he might be just and pardon and justify, every one that believeth on him. Faith is the approval of that wonderful provision of grace, to such a degree as to renounce every other plea, and to ask the mercy of God for Christ's sake. Christ is the object of faith, as by him alone we are justified and saved. This leads us to,

Fifthly. *The nature and effects of faith.* Faith is a purely *receiving* and *appropriating* act. The believer comes to God, a mendicant—poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and receives, to his everlasting enrichment. Christ made unto him wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. It was the righteousness of Christ, to whom Abraham looked, as the object of faith, by which the patriarch was made righteous before God: (Gen. xv: 4–6. Gal. iii. 16. John viii : 56. Rom. iv. 3 ;) and these things were written for our benefit, to whom like righteousness shall be imputed if we also believe. (Rom. iv. 24. *ib.* x. 9, 10. 1 John v. 9, 10. Is. lxi. 10.] Not only so—Faith converts every promise and every word of God into a present, living and operative reality. It is the highest style of assurance of which the human mind is capable. It gives actual *subsistence* to things afar off, and behold as if *demonstrated* the greatest improbabilities, and the most insolvable mysteries of the di-

vine word. (Heb. xi : i.) Indeed, it is, in all things, to take God at his word, "being fully persuaded, that what he has promised, he is able also to perform. (Rom. iv : 21,) and under this persuasion, to act as if that word was now being fulfilled. (Heb. xi : 7, 13.) "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." (Heb. x : 19–23.)

LESSON XXXIII.

THE HOLY GHOST.

QUESTION. In the last lesson, you said that faith was wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost: who is the Holy Ghost?

ANSWER. The Holy Ghost is the third person in the God-head. Math. xviii : 19. 2 Cor. xiii : 14. 1 John v : 7.

Q. What is the first act of the Holy Ghost, in producing faith in the heart?

A. When the Spirit is come he shall reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. John xvi: 8, 9.

Q. By what means does the Holy Spirit convince men of the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the nature and degree of righteousness which God requires, and the fearfulness of his judgments upon those who have it not?

A. The Holy Ghost convinces men of sin, by enabling them to understand the law; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom. iii: 20. *ib.* v: 20. *ib.* vii: 7.

Q. Would any man come to Christ for salvation, unless he were first deeply impressed with a sense of his guilt and danger?

A. No. They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Math. ix: 12. Rom. x: 3.

Q. Do you think it possible, that any of our fallen race could properly understand the holiness, spirituality, and extent of the divine law, and yet not feel the great necessity of the precious atoning blood of Christ, to gain him favor with God?

A. No. I was alive once without the law; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. Rom. vii: 9–13. *ib.* iv: 15. 1 Cor. xv: 56.

Q. When the Holy Spirit has thus convinced men of sin, and their consequent exposedness to the wrath of God, what does he then do?

A. He shall glorify Christ, for he shall take of the things of him, and shall shew them unto us. John xvi: 14, 15. Math. xiii: 11. John xiv: 26. *ib.* xvi: 25. 2 Cor. iii: 14–17.

Q. Can we rightly apprehend the atonement of Christ, and its adaptedness to the condition of the soul without the aids of the Spirit?

A. No. The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 2. Cor. iv. 4. Is. liii: 2. John i: 5. Acts iii. 14–17. 1 Cor. i: 18, 23. 1 Tim. i: 13.

Q. Does not the Holy Spirit, at the same time that he unfolds the excellency of Christ, also awaken in the heart a lively disposition to receive him, and to rely upon him for salvation?

A. Yes. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. 1 John v: 1. John i: 12, 13. 1 Cor. xii: 3: 2 Cor. iii: 17, 18.

Q. Would any man ever believe on Christ in a saving manner, if the Spirit of God did not first renew him in the spirit of his mind?

A. No. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him—neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii: 14, 15. Math. xi: 25. *ib.* xvi: 16, 17. 1 Cor. ii: 7–10. 2 Cor. iv: 6.

Q. By what instrumentality does the Holy Spirit ordinarily operate, in unfolding the excellency of Christ, and in bringing men to believe on him?

A. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Rom. x: 17, 14. 1 Cor. i: 21. Eph. i: 13. *ib.* vi: 17. Col. i: 6. 1 Thes. i: 5. *ib.* ii: 11. Heb. iv: 12. James i: 18.

Q. It was customary, in olden times, when one purchased a piece of property to set a mark upon it, that he might afterwards distinguish and know it; with what are believers sealed, that God may distinguish them from those who believe not?

A. After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and having this mark, God knoweth them that are his. Eph. i. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Rom. viii. 9. John vii. 39. Acts ii. 38. *ib.* v. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 16. *ib.* vi: 19. 2 Cor. i: 22. *ib.* vi: 16, Eph. ii: 21, 22. Heb. iii. 6.

Q. Is not this continual in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, likewise, evidence to us, that we are the children of God, and that we shall certainly be saved?

A. Yes. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and is the earnest, (or assurance) of our inheritance, until the final redemption of the purchased possession. Rom. viii. 16. Eph. 1. 14. Rom. viii. 14–17. 2 Cor. v. 5. Gal. iv. 6.

Q. Should we not very carefully avoid every thing offensive to the Holy Spirit, by whom we receive so many blessings?

A. Yes. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Eph. iv: 30. Is. lxiii: 10. Acts vii: 51. Gen. vi: 3.

Q. What is said of those who shall presumptuously and maliciously offend against the Holy Spirit?

He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of Eternal damnation. Mark iii: 29. Math. xii: 32. Luke xii: 10. Heb. xi: 36, 27. 1 John xvi, 17.

REMARKS.

It has been observed already, that the mission

and influences of the Holy Spirit, hath their origin in the covenant of redemption. This is true, whether we consider that mission, and those influences before or after the actual advent, death, and resurrection of Christ. In the former case, they proceeded upon the ground of what Christ should hereafter accomplish—which was beheld by the divine mind as already done: and in the latter case they proceed upon the ground of what he has actually accomplished. But we remark,

First. *The character of the Holy Spirit.* The Holy Ghost is not a divine attribute, but a divine person—the third person of the God-head.

(1) *The personality of the Holy Ghost.* All the actions and attributes of a real person, are, in the scriptures, given to the Holy Spirit. He is said to be sent; to move; to strive; to speak; to testify; to guide; to lead; to help our infirmities; to search and to know all things; to be pleased; to be provoked; to be vexed; to be resisted; to be grieved; to be spoken against; to be lied unto; to be blasphemed; which things can with no possible propriety be predicated of any but a real person; and they, therefore demonstrate the personality of the Spirit. (Gal. iv: 6. Gen. i: 2. *ib.* vi: 3. Rev. ii: 7. John xv: 26. *ib.* xvi: 13. Rom. viii: 14, 26. 1 Cor. ii: 10, 11. Acts xv: 28. Is. lxiii: 10. Acts vii: 51. Eph. iv: 30. Math. xii: 32. Acts v: 3. Mark iii: 29.)

(2) *The divinity of the Holy Ghost.* The titles, attributes, and works of the true God, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. He is both Lord and God.

(2 Cor. iii: 17. Acts v: 34.) He is possessed of all the incommunicable perfections of deity—eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, truth, holiness, glory, and goodness. (Heb. ix: 14. Ps. cxxxix: 7. 2 Cor. ii: 10, 11. Rom. xv: 19. John xiv: 17, 26. 1 Pet. iv: 14. Neh. ix: 20. Ps. cxxxxiii: 10.) The works of the true God are all attributed to the Spirit—creation, inspiration, regeneration, sanctification, and resurrection of the dead. (Gen. i: 2. Job xxvi: 13. *ib.* xxxiii: 4. John xvi: 13. 2 Tim. iii: 16. 2 Pet. i: 21 John iii: 5, 6. *ib.* vi: 63: 1 Cor. vi: 11. 1 Pet. iii: 18. Rom. viii: 11.) Now, all this were absolutely incredible, except upon the supposition of the real divinity of the Holy Spirit.

(3) *The Holy Ghost is the third person in the God-head.* Not, indeed, in respect of essential perfection; but in the relation of offices, in the execution of the remedial scheme. We must not understand the numerals, "first," "second," and "third," when applied to the persons of the God-head, as importing so many degrees of divine excellence and glory; for the "three that bear record in heaven are one." (1 John v: 7.) But as denoting the order in which the triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, engaged to co-operate in the salvation of sinners. Accordingly this is the order in which they are ordinarily represented in the sacred oracles. Witness the baptismal ceremony, and the apostolic benediction. (Math. xxviii: 19. 2 Cor. xiii: 14.)

SECONDLY. *The offices of the Holy Ghost.*

The office work of the Spirit may be properly distinguished into ordinary and extraordinary.

(1) *Extraordinary.* The extraordinary functions of the Holy Spirit were the inspiration of the scriptures: (John xiv: 26. *ib.* xvi: 13. 2 Tim. iii: 16. 2 Pet. i: 21,) and the miraculous endowments of the sacred writers—endowments whereby they were enabled to perform miracles in attestation of the divine authenticity of their doctrines. (Acts i: 8. *ib.* ii: 32, 33. *ib.* iv. 33. Rom. xv: 19. 1 Cor. xii: 4–10. 2 Cor. xii. 12.) These are called extraordinary, because they were not designed to be perpetual in the christian church. Miracles were of no farther use after inspiration ceased. (Rev. xxii: 18, 19,) and both were together discontinued.

(2) *Ordinary.* The ordinary offices of the Spirit, are those by which, to the latest ages of the world, the hearts of men will be subdued, sanctified and fitted for the kingdom of heaven; and, perhaps, if we would carefully distinguish the several acts of the Spirit, in the progress of this great moral renovation, the christian world would be saved the pain of much needless controversy on a subject of admitted difficulty. When are we partakers of the Holy Ghost? "After baptism," says one. (Acts ii: 38. *ib.* v: 32.) This is the truth; but not the whole truth. When are we partakers of the Holy Ghost? "Before baptism," says another. (Acts x: 48, 7, 48.) This also is the truth, but not the whole truth. The apparent contradiction in the teaching of the apostles, on

such occasions, may be easily harmonized, if we patiently remark the order of the Spirit's operations, and allow, that they alluded to the different acts of the same Spirit. It seems to us to be clearly a scripture doctrine, that faith in Christ should precede baptism, and that this faith is the effect of the operation of the Holy Spirit. (Acts viii, 37. 1 Cor. xii: 3. John i: 12, 13,) but it is equally clear, that there is an act of the Spirit after baptism, by which we feel an assurance of salvation, that is not promised to any in the neglect of that duty. Acts ii: 38. *ib.* v. 32. Rom. viii: 16. Eph. i: 14. 1 Pet. iii: 21.

LESSON XXXIV.

REGENERATION.

QUESTION. You said, in your last lesson, that "whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. What do you understand by being born of God?

ANSWER. That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of you mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness

and true holiness. Eph. vi : 22–24. Ps. li : 10. Rom. xii: 2 Cor. v: 17. Col. iii: 8–10.

Q Why do you call this renewal of the tempers and dispositions of the heart, "being born of God ?"

A Because, we are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God the Spirit. John i: 13. *ib.* iii. 5. *ib.* vi: 63. Eph. ii: 4–10. Phil. ii: 12, 13. Tit. iii : 5.

Q Could not men effect this change in their own hearts and character without the aids of the Spirit ?

A No. Can the Ethiopean change his skin, or the Leopard his spots ? then may ye all do good that are accustomed to do evil. Jer. xiii, 23. Job xv, 16. Ps. lviii, 3–5. Jer. ii, 25. John v, 40. *ib.* vi, 44. *ib.* Ps. lxxx, 3, 7, 19. Jer. xxxi, 18. Lam. v; 21.

Q By what means does the Holy Spirit produce this change in the hearts of sinners ?

A Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth; that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. James i, 18. 1 Cor. iv, 15. Eph. i, 13. *ib.* vi, 17. Heb. iv, 12. 1 Pet. i, 23. 2 Pet. i, 3, 4.

Q Why is it absolutely necessary that a man should experience this new birth?

A Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John iii, 5. Math. v, 20. *ib.* xviii, 3. Rom. viii, 6–10. 1 Cor. xiii, 1–3. Gal. vi, 15. Tit. iii, 5.

Q What is the great difference between those who are regenerated, and those who are not?

A That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit: they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. John iii, 6. Rom. viii, 5. Math. vi, 31–33. Gal. 6, 7, 8.

Q Do those who are begotten of the Spirit possess any more lively, distinct and impressive views of the divine character than they had before?

A Yes. God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. iv, 6. Job xxxxii, 5, 6. Ps. xxxvi, 9. *ib.* cxxxix, 1–12. Is. vi, 5. Jer. xxiv, 7. Dan. ix, 4–9. John xvii, 3. 2 Cor. iii, 18. Col. iii, 10. James iii, 17. 2 Pet. i, 3.

Q Is this change of views attended with any change of desires and affections towards God?

A Yes. Whom have I in heaven but God? and there is none on earth that I desire besides him: in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Ps. lxxiii, 25. *ib.* xvi. 11.

Q Will you enumerate the fruits of the Spirit in a truly regenerated heart?

A The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Gal. v, 22, 23.

Q Do not those who are born of God entertain a deep and tender affection toward all their christian brethren?

A Yes. By this we know, that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 1 John iii, 14. Ps. xv, 4. *ib.* xvi, 3. John xiii, 34, 35. Rom. xii, 9, 10. 1 Cor. iii, 3. *ib.* xii, 14–27. *ib.* xiii, 1–7. 1 Thes. iv, 9. 1 John iii, 17, 18. *ib.* iv, 7, 8. *ib.* v, 1.

Q Does the work of regeneration extend so far at the first, that the christian man will have no farther occasion to watch and pray and strive?

A. No. I delight in the law of God after the

inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. Rom. vii, 22, 23. Ps. i, 2. *ib.* xi. 9, 20. Jer. xxxi, 33. Ezek. xi, 19, 20. 2 Cor. iii, 3. Rom. vii, 15–21. Gal. v, 16, 17.

Q. But will not the truly regenerated man, hold on his way, industriously laboring to obtain the mastery over his fleshly nature, and attain perfect holiness?

A. Yes. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day. Pro. iv, 18. Ps. xxxvii, 23, 24. Pro. xiv, 16. Mic. vii, 8. Math. xiii, 31, 33. Rom. ii, 7. *ib.* vi, 2, 22. *ib.* viii, 13. 1 Cor. viiii, 27. 2 Cor. iii, 18. *ib.* vii, 1. Gal. v, 24. Eph. iv, 12, 13. Phil. iii, 12–14. Heb. iii, 6, 14. *ib.* xii, 14 2 Pet. i, 5–7. 1 John v, 4.

Q With what feelings does the regenerated soul think of his past sins, and of his frequent failures in duty now?

A. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Jer. xxxi, 19. Ps. li, 1–15. Math. xxvi, 75.

REMARKS.

First. *The reality of regeneration.* We are frank to allow, that much of the language that describes the new birth, is, from the nature of the case, obliged to be metaphorical. It is not, however, for that reason, to be regarded less true, or less significant. The design of metaphors is not to convey false impressions to the mind; but to afford more lively, and distinct apprehensions of things otherwise incomprehensible. This remark is equally applicable to the figurative language of the bible, as to the language of ordinary life. Such is the disparity between the things of God and the capacities of the human mind, that it were difficult to conceive, that the latter should at all understand the former without the aid of types and symbols; and whatever objection the sticklers for philosophical exactness may raise to the figurative style in which the doctrine of regeneration is expressed, we doubt whether reason itself would not employ much the same modes of expression, were it engaged to represent the same change in all its forms and phases. We think it will be found, upon a close examination, that no set of words of the same number and simplicity, will convey a more distinct, complete, and intelligible idea of an entire mental and moral renovation, than those employed by the sacred writers as exhibited in the lesson above. The nature, necessity, author, effects and tendencies of this change they so clearly illustrate, that the simplest minds

cannot mistake it, and in a form so concise that philosophy itself may thence derive definitions.

Secondly. *The necessity of regeneration.* The necessity of regeneration results from the depravity of the human heart. Heaven is a holy place; the inhabitants of heaven are holy beings; the employments and pursuits of heaven are all of a pure and holy character. To gaze with unbeclouded eyes upon the effulgence of the divine glory—to study his perfections—to admire his excellence, and, in prostrate adoration, to extol and worship him, will constitute the uninterrupted pleasures of the redeemed throughout eternal ages. Between such employments and the tastes and tempers of the natural man, there is not a semblance of congeniality. They are as widely removed, and as absolutely irreconcilable as light and darkness. Nor is there in the pains and struggles of the dying hour, any thing to annihilate that difference, or induce that moral fitness for the saints' everlasting rest. The same is true also of the cold and wasting grave whither we tend. Hence the force of language like the following: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness." "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might"; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." (Prov. xiv, 32. Rev. xxii, 11. Ecl. ix, 10. John iii, 7.)

THIRDLY. *The nature of regeneration.* "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." (John iii, 6. Rom. viii, 5:) Such is the style in which our Lord and his apostle represent the striking contrast between the natural and renewed man. Regeneration is a radical change of the whole moral character. It is an absolute change of views; of affections; of pleasures; of hopes; of desires; of purposes; and of pursuits. To the truly regenerated soul, the doctrines and claims of the christian religion—the boundless perfections of the divine being; the odious and destructive nature of sin; the adorable excellency of Christ in his death and intercession; its own relation to the redeemer and to a lost and ruined world; the shortness of time and the overwhelming fearfulness of eternity—these no longer appear as the vagaries of an idle and speculative mind; but as the most solemn, impressive, and affecting realities, awakening new sentiments, imparting new impulses, and leading to new resolutions, plans and modes of life. In a word, "if any man be in Christ, he is, emphatically, a new creature, old things have passed away; behold all things have become new." (2 Cor. v, 17.) Hence remark,

FOURTHLY. *The tendencies of regeneration.* There is a sense, in which regeneration is instantaneous and perfect: and there is a sense, in which

it is partial and progressive. He that is born of God is enstamped with all the essential features, and possessed of all the essential elements of a holy character. He is dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. A principle of candor, of sincerity, of truth, of honesty, of benevolence, of the fear of the Lord is implanted in the heart—so that were he to die, he would be immediately translated to the paradise above. Nevertheless, remaining in the present world, he is still clogged about with a cumberous mortality, in whose propensities and passions, matured and fortified by long indulgence and habit, he will find the occasion of many a sharp and painful contest. Old and vitiated tastes must be repressed and mortified; old customs must be broken up; old associations abandoned; old lessons forgotten; old prejudicies and prepossessions rooted and grounded in the heart itself, must be discarded: and to wage an exterminating war, like this, against self, and at the same time withstand a continual, and if possible a fiercer onset from without, must demand no little vigilance and effort, and may well awaken our sympathy should he occasionally fall. But "how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Accordingly, the tendencies of regeneration are all towards a state of perfect holiness. "Brethren," said the eminent St. Paul, "I count not myself to have apprehended, neither yet to be already perfect: but this one thing I do forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which

are before; I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and, if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." (Phil. iii. 12–15.)

LESSON XXXV.

REPENTENCE.

QUESTION. The subject of our last lesson was regeneration, in which you said, "after that you were turned, you repented:" what is repentance?

ANSWER. Repentance is godly sorrow for sin.

Q Why do you call repentance a godly sorrow?

A Because it has respect to God as our lawgiver; is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God; and leads the soul to God, for pardon and salvation Ps. li, 4. Acts xx, 21. Zech. xii, 10. Acts ii, 37. *ib.* xi, 18. 2 Tim. ii, 25. Luke xviii, 13. 2 Cor. vii, 10.

Q Whom does God command thus to repent?

A The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent. Acts xvii, 30. Math. ix, 13. *ib.* xi, 20. Mark vi, 12. Luke xxiv, 47. Acts ii, 38, *ib.* viii, 21–23. *ib.* xxvi, 20.

Q "God is angry with the wicked every day:" why then does he prolong their life, and confer so many blessings upon them?

A God is not slack concerning his promised judgments, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. iii, 9. Ezek. xviii, 30–32. *ib.* xxxiii, 11. Rom. ii, 4 Rev. ii, 21. *ib.* iii, 19.

Q In what manner do holy beings regard the repentance of sinners?

A There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance. Luke xv, 7. 20–24. Jer. xxxi, 18–20. Rev. iii, 17, 18.

Q What will become of those, who despising the goodness and forbearance of God, shall persist in hardening their hearts in impenitence and sin?

A He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck shall be suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy. Pro. xxix, 1. Ps. xvii, 11–13.

ib. ix. 17. *ib.* l, 22. Pro. i, 24–32. *ib.* xiv, 32. Luke x, 12–14. *ib.* xiii, 3. Rom. ii, 5. Rev. ii, 22.

Q What is said of those, on the contrary, who are deeply afflicted, pained, and grieved on account of their guilt and transgression?

A The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Ps. xxxiv, 18. *ib.* li, 17. Is. lvii, 15. *ib.* lxi, 1–3 *ib.* lxvi, 2. Joel ii, 12, 13. Math. v, 4. *ib.* xi, 28–30. *ib.* xii, 20. Luke xviii, 13, 14. John vi, 37.

Q Will not a truly penitent person frankly confess all his sins, without disguise, excuse, or palliation?

A Yes. I acknowledge my sin unto thee, O Lord; and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and he forgave the iniquity of my sin. Ps. xxxii 5. Lev. v, 4, 5, Josh. vii, 19, 20. Ps. li, 3. Pro. xxviii, 13. Jer. xiv, 20. Hos. v. 15. Math. iii, 6. Acts xix, 18, 19. 1 John i, 9.

Q What are we required to do in the case of offences done to our fellow men?

A If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against

thee, leave there thy gift before the altar; go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Math. v, 23–26. Jas. v, 6.

Q Will not the true penitent be disposed, to the utmost of his ability, to restore all the gain he has illy acquired, by cheating, lying, gambling, stealing and other fraudulent and unholy means?

A. Yes. And Zaccheus stood and said, behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four fold. Luke xix, 8. Lev. vi, 2–5. Num. v. 6–8. 1 Sam. xii, 3. Ezek. xxxiii, 14, 15.

Q What does God require us to do towards those who have injured us, as a pre-requisite to our forgiveness?

A When ye stand praying, forgive; if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses: but if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. Mark xi, 25, 26. Mat. xviii, 35. *ib.* vi. 14, 15. Acts vii, 59, 60. Eph. iv, 32. Col. iii, 12, 13. 1 John iii, 14, 15.

Q What will be the end of those who profess to repent, and yet have not these fruits and evidences of repentance?

A They will be destroyed: for behold the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. Math. iii, 10. John xv, 8. 1 John iii, 10. Math. v. 27–32. *ib.* viii, 13–20. *ib.* xix, 22.

Q But will not the Lord pardon and accept of such as put away their sins and return unto him?

A. Yes. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Is. lv, 7. *ib.* i, 16–18. Dan. iv, 27. Hos. xiv, 1, 2.

Q Does not Godly sorrow tend to make a man exceedingly strict in the avoidance of sin, and careful in the practice of piety in future?

A. Yes. Behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge!

2 Cor. vii, 10. Job xxvii, 6. *ib.* xxxiv, 32. Acts xix, 18, 19. *ib.* xxiv, 16. 1 Thes. i, 9. 2 Tim. ii, 19. Tit. ii, 11, 12. Heb. 9, 14.

REMARKS.

First. *The order of the graces.* In remarking upon the order of the christian graces, it is necessary to caution the reader, to carefully distinguish between the order of time, and the order of nature. Irrespective of the arrangement of the above lessons, the reason of which arrangement can require no explanation, a close and attentive examination into what they contain, will show, that regeneration is made to precede both repentance and faith. Their precedence, however, must not be understood of time, but of nature. In regard to time, we consider the three to take place at one and the same moment. We have no thought, that any soul was ever regenerated, which was not, instantaneously, both penitent, and believing; and, on the contrary, we have no idea, that any soul was ever the subject of evangelical faith or repentance, which was not regenerated in its tempers and dispositions. Nevertheless, in the order of nature, we consider regeneration to precede repentance: (Jer. xxxi, 19,) and repentance to precede faith. (Math. xxi, 32. Mark i, 15. Acts xx, 21. 2 Tim.ii, 25.)

Secondly. *The paradox of the graces.* Repentance and faith, and all their kindred virtues,

are positively commanded of men; and in their neglect, they are in the highest degree culpable and blame-worthy; and yet, their performance depends entirely upon the influence of the Holy Spirit—a power wholly without, and independent of themselves. Nor is there any incongruity in this, if we carefully distinguish between the natural and moral ability of men: or in other words, between their capacity, and their disposition. If a servant possess the natural capacity to obey his master, that is a sufficient reason to render him a fit subject of command. Although it is emphatically certain, that an entire want of a will to obey, may render the non-performance of the act as absolute, as if he had been wholly destitute of the requisite natural power; yet, no master considers himself obliged to impart to his servant a disposition to obey, before he may rightfully command him: nor yet, does he regard that want of desposition the smallest excuse for any disobedience. The same is true, also, of the divine government. If sinners have the natural capacity to obey God, (and this is abundantly evident, both from what is required of them, and from the fact that they disobey him) then, they are properly the subjects of the divine commands: nor does their total want of a disposition or will to obey, in the least sense, absolve them from obligation to do so. It is the absolutely paralizing influence of this want of will to repent and believe, to which our Lord refers, when he says: "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me,

draw him:" (John vi, 44. *ib.* v, 40,) and yet, he says, "He that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi, 16. John iii, 36.)

THIRDLY. *The essential of the graces.* When we speak of natural things, men distinctly understand what we mean by a principle of honesty, of truth, of chastity, of industry, of patriotism, of valor or of cowardice: and in such cases, they as widely distinguish between the principle, and the acts to which it gives rise, as they do between those persons who possess such principles, and those who have them not. Now the same things we desire to remark in religion. When we speak of vital christianity, we allude, not to the acquisition of some natural endowment or faculty; nor yet to any one mental or bodily act of life; but to the possession of a new and holy principle implanted in the heart. In the scriptures, this principle is variously styled, "the root of the matter;" "the divine nature;" "the seed of God;" &c. (Job xix, 28. Math. xiii, 21. John i, 4. Eph. iv, 18. 2 Pet. i, 4. 1 John iii, 9,) and those, who are possessed of it, are said, to "be born again;" "born of God;" to have a "new heart," "a right spirit," to have the "law of God written in their hearts." (1 Pet. i, 23. John i, 13. Ezek. xi, 19. *ib.* xviii, 31. Ps. li, 10. Jer. xxxi, 31. Heb. x, 16.) This divine principle assumes various appearances according to the subjects of its contemplation. When the being and perfections of God are referred to, it is a principle of love and reverence; when referred

to his command and authority, it is a principle of obedience and acquiescence; when his promises are contemplated, it is a principle of confidence and expectation; when Christ is its object, it is a principle of reliance and trust; when the sinfulness of its own subject is considered, it is a principle of repentance; when the significance and helplessness of its subject are remembered, it is a principle of humility and dependence; when the injuries we have suffered are mentioned, it is a forgiving principle; when the injuries we have inflicted upon others are beheld, it is a principle to offer every possible satisfaction: and thus, in all the relations we sustain in the universe, it is a principle to do unto others as we would have them to do unto us—to render unto God, that which is due to him, and to render unto man that which of right belongs to him. This leads us to remark,

Fourthly. *The evidence of the graces.* The evidence of grace in the heart is the conduct of after life. It were a moral impossibility, that one should possess a principle of piety, and yet act contrary thereto. (Math. vii. 16–20.) What should we think of his principle of pecuniary honesty, who should habitually evade the payment of his just debts? or of his principle of veracity, who should, ever, and anon, be guilty of prevarication and falsehood? In like manner, the apostle says, "show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." (Jas. ii, 18.) A principle of obedience, will prompt to a literal, universal, and daily performance of all the known

will of God: and a principle of love to our fellow men will prompt to those acts which the law of love demands—whether the forgiveness of offenders, or restitution for that which another has suffered at our hands: or the fulfilment of those offices of sympathy and aid, which their miseries and helplessness require. "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little childred, let us not love in the word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth." In all things walk worthy of the Lord, to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (1 John iii, 17, 18. Col. i, 10.)

LESSON XXXVI.

JUSTIFICATION.

QUESTION. We have now considered regeneration, repentance, and faith. The next subject in order is justification: What do you understand by justification?

ANSWER. Justification is an acquittal from a charge of blame. Rom. iv, 6–8. 2 Cor. v, 19.

Q. To whom does it pertain to justify those who are charged with sin against God?

A It is God that justifieth. Rom. viii, 33. Is. xxxxiii, 25. Mark ii, 7. Rom. iv, 5.

Q Does God in the act of justification allow, that men have not sinned; or if they have, that their sins are of trifling importance?

A No. We are sure, that the judgment of God is according to truth: and we have before proved that all are under sin, and that sin by the commandment is exceeding sinful. Rom. ii, 2. *ib.* vii, 13.

Q Upon what ground, then, does God justify and acquit those who are proven to be guilty of sin?

A We are justified on the ground of the righteousness of Christ. For him hath God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins. Rom. iii, 25, 26. Is. xxxxii, 21. *ib.* lxi, 10. Jer. xxiii, 6. Dan. ix, 24–26. Rom. viii, 3, 4. *ib.* x, 4. 1 Cor. i, 3. 2 Cor. v, 21. Phil. iii, 8, 9.

Q What is the condition upon which we become personally interested in the righteousness of Christ to pardon and justification?

A The condition of justification is faith in Christ. For he that believeth on the Son is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemn-

ed already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John iii, 18. Is. liii, 11. Mark xvi, 16. John iii, 16. Rom. iii, 3, 20-24. *ib.* ix, 30–32. Gal. ii, 16.

Q Is justification an acquittal of the believer from all his sins with all their effects upon the divine government; or does it extend to only a part of them?

A Justification extends to all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Acts xiii, 39. Rom. v, 16. *ib.* viii, 33, 34.

Q Are we, by faith in Christ, made really righteous persons, before God, in the same sense as holy angels are righteous, and which would exclude the idea of grace in our justification?

A No. When we believe, the righteousness of Christ, which is not really ours, is accounted to us, as though it were ours: and we are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. iii, 24. *ib.* iv, 4, 5, 16. Eph. ii, 8. Tit. iii, 4, 5.

Q If, then, God justifies us while we have no personal righteousness of our own, must he not make void the law?

A No. We do not make void the law through

faith: but we establish the law. Rom. iii, 31. *ib.* viii, 3, 4.

Q Will you explain how the law is established while those are justified who have no personal righteousness?

A The law is established in this, that Christ our substitute hath fulfilled the law in our stead; and we become interested in his righteousness by faith; and henceforth make the law the rule of our conduct—thus accounting the law holy, just and good. Is. xxxxii, 21. Math. v, 17. Rom. x, 4 1 Cor. 7, 22. *ib.* ix, 21.

Q What special privileges does God confer upon those who are justified?

A Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom, also, we have access, by faith, into this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rom. v, 1, 2, 8–10. 2 Cor. v, 19. Eph. ii, 12–19.

Q Does God, also, recognize believers in Christ as his sons and daughters, and entitle them to the privileges of heirship with his Son Jesus?

A Yes. We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Gal.

iii, 26. Rom. viii, 17. 2 Cor. vi, 17, 18. 1 John iii, 1, 2.

Q Will God ever reverse the act of justification, and finally condemn those to destruction, whom he hath justified and thus highly distinguished?

A No. Jesus said, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation. John v, 24. Rom, viii, 1, 35–39. Heb. x, 14, 39. 1 Pet. i, 5.

REMARKS.

First. *The nature of justification.* The term justification is derived from the proceedings of human courts, in which an individual, arraigned under charge of criminal conduct, is acquitted—being found innocent: and although there is, doubtless, a sufficient analogy between the acquittal of sinners in the divine government, and the justification of an accused in human judicatories to render the term admissible, yet, in the gospel, it must, obviously be taken, not in its literal and ordinary use, but in a figurative and accommodated sense. Whatever analogy exists must relate, not to the *grounds*, but to the *sequents* of justification. In human courts, the accused is acquitted on the ground of his innocence, and because he is proven to deserve it. In the divine

dispensation, the accused is acquitted—having first been convicted of crime and personal demerit. In one case, justification is opposed to forgiveness: in the other, forgiveness is an essentail branch of justification. Here, it proceeds wholly upon the principle of unmerited grace: there, it proceeds upon the principle of sheer and impartial justice. Justification, in the gospel acceptation, extends to every past offence, and provides against a future condemnation: under human laws, it is an acquittal from only the present charge, and in no-wise secures the justified against a subsequent trial and punishment upon a different ground. Finally, justification in an earthly court confers no extra immunities upon the acquitted: whereas, those whom God justifies he entitles to all the honors and privileges of sons and heirs—they are made heirs of God, and joint heirs, with Jesus Christ, to the felicities of Eternal life.

Secondly. *The ground of justification.* The scriptures evidently represent the imputed righteousness of Christ, as the ground upon which we are justified before God. (Is. xxxxii, 21. Jer. xxiii, 6. Rom. iii, 25, 26. *ib.* x, 4. 1 Cor. i, 30. 2 Cor. v, 21. Phil. iii, 9.) Nevertheless, imputation must not be understood in the sense of an actual transfer; but in the sense of a consideration. It is not so much a *mode* of treatment, as a *reason* of treatment. Justification on account of the righteousness of Christ, is not an imparting of his righteousness to us, as when one puts his garment upon another; but it is a reason, or consider-

ation, in view of which God deals with us, as though we had not sinned. The righteousness of Christ is strictly his own; and our unrighteousness is strictly our own. When he "suffered," it was "the just for the unjust"—the sinless for the guilty. He was neither made a sinner by the imputation of our sins; nor are we made righteous by the imputation of his righteousness. In the one case, he suffered for us, as though he had been a sinner; and in the other, we are acquitted, as though we had been righteous. Justification is not something done in us: but something done concerning us—it is not a moral change; (that is sanctification,) but a legal change—it is a change of our standing and position in relation to the law.

THIRDLY. *The period of justification.* The origin of the term justification, has led to some contrariety of opinions, both as to the thing itself, and the period when it takes place:—some representing it as a sentence passing in the divine mind from eternity, others as consisting in a persuasion of acceptance with God: and others still, as a decree to finally acquit. But if this be a correct method of representing this subject, it will equally apply to its opposite—condemnation: and yet, we doubt whether our readers will allow, that none are under condemnation until they become sensibly persuaded of it, or that condemnation consists in either an eternal sentence of reprobation, or a decree to finally condemn. We are frank to admit, that God did purpose from eternity to justify those who believe in Christ:

(Gal. iii. 8,) and that those who are justified, will be publicly recognized as such in the great assize of the world; (Math. x, 32. Luke xii, 8) and farther, that real believers, do perhaps, at some period in life enjoy a strong persuasion of their acceptance with God: (Gal. iv, 6. Eph. i, 14,) but this is very far from making justification to consist in either one of these. To us, it seems to be the uniform teaching of the scriptures, that all unbelievers are already condemned, and this without any regard to their persuasions on the subject, and that while they continue thus, they are children of wrath; (John iii, 18. Eph. ii, 3,) but, on the contrary, that, whatever justification may be, it takes place at the moment of believing in Christ. (John iii, 18. *ib.* v, 24. Acts xiii, 39. Rom. v, i, *ib.* 8, 1.) Faith is the real, and only bond of union with Christ; and therefore, we may as readily imagine a soul justified without Christ, as we may, that justification takes place a moment before, or after faith. Accordingly, it is mentioned as something subsequent to predestination, and anterior to glorification. (Rom. viii, 30.)

Fourthly. *The extent of justification.* That justification extends to the remission of sins that are past, is evident from Rom. iii, 25: and seeing it is promised in John v, 24, that the believer shall not come into condemnation, it must also imply a provision against future liabilities. This provision however does not consist in a total exemption from the possibility of sinning, nor even from the certainty of it. It is a matter of experience,

and which is corroborated by the experience of the most eminent and pious individuals, whose names are mentioned in the sacred volume, that frequent failures in duty, will lay the foundation of many an heartfelt confession and regret even after we have been justified by faith. But it is a provision of grace that the faith of the child of God shall not utterly fail, that his heart shall not depart from God—that he shall still hold on his way. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, saith God, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." "The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy fail not." "We are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." (Jer. xxxii, 40. Luke xxii, 31, 32. 1 Pet. i, 5.) To this continual intercession of Christ, and to this continual preservation in faith by the Almighty power of God is to be attributed the security of the soul against ultimate condemnation. (Rom. viii,34–39.) We are safe, only because God makes us such.

LESSON XXXVII.

ELECTION.

QUESTION. Having considered the *plan* of salvation at full length, we are now prepared to examine what you said in the lesson on the "Covenant of Redemption; that God the Father, in solemn promise, guaranteed the Son, that a portion of the human race should certainly be saved by his death. Did God, at that period, absolutely know how many, and who they were, that should be thus saved?

ANSWER. Yes. And whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Rom. viii, 29. Eph. i, 5.

Q What was the *first and immediate* object to which God predestinated those whom he foreknew in this special sense?

A They were elected according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. i, 2. Eph. i, 4.

Q Were they not also predestinated to salvation, as the *ultimate* object of their election?

A Yes. We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Thes. ii, 33. Rom. viii, 30. Eph. i, 4, 5.

Q Did God elect them to salvation because they had already obtained an interest in Christ; or do men become interested in Christ, as the result of election and predestination?

A We have obtained an inheritance in Christ, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Eph. i, 11. Acts xiii, 48. John xv. 16. Rom. viii, 29–30. Eph. i, 4, 5. 2 Tim. i, 9. 1 John iv. 19.

Q Is it absolutely certain that all the elect will become interested in Christ and be saved?

A Yes. Jesus said, All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, John vi, 37. Rom. viii, 30.

By what means will they be brought to Christ, that their salvation will be rendered certain?

A The elect will be brought to Christ by the power of God through the gospel. For, thus saith

the Lord, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Jer. xxxi, 3. Hos. xi, 4. John vi, 44, 45. Rom. viii, 30. 1 Cor. i, 24. 2 Cor. iii, 17, 18. 2 Thes. ii, 13, 14. 2 Tim i, 9.

Q Does the everlasting, electing love of God include the entire human race—so that all will be drawn to Christ and be saved?

A No. Christ is, to many, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. 1 Pet. ii, 8. Rom. ix. 21, 22. Tit. i, 16. 2 Pet. ii, 1, 12. 1 John ii, 22. Rev. xiii, 8.

Q Was there any original difference in the moral characters of men, that God should purpose to save some and not others?

A No. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Ps. xiv, 23.

Q Why then did he elect some to salvation and not all?

A He saith I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on

whom I will have compassion. Rom. ix, 15. Math. xi, 25, 26.

Q How can you show that this doctrine does not make God a respecter of persons?

A A respecter of persons is one who shows a partiality for some on account of what they possess more than others: which is not the case in the election of grace. Jas. ii, 1–4. Acts x, 34, 35. Rom. ix, 16.

Q What was the influence of this doctrine upon the apostle Paul, as a minister of God?

A Paul said, Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more: and I endure all things for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 1 Cor. ix, 19. 2 Tim. ii, 10.

Q Is not our election to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, an important reason why we should cultivate personal holiness?

A Yes, Let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation; for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 The v, 8, 9. Col. iii, 12. 2 Peti, 10. 1 John iii, 33.

Q. How may we know that God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation?

A. When the gospel of Christ is received into good and honest hearts, and we turn from sin to the practice of holiness, it is evidence of our election to eternal life. 1 Thes. i, 3–9.

Q. If men persist in rebellion, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and an occasion to sin, have they not reason to fear that they are predestinated to destruction?

A. Yes. The prophet said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened to my counsel. 2 Chron. xxv, 16. 1 Sam. ii, 25. 1 Pet. ii, 8. Jude 4.

REMARKS.

The doctrine of election, in some form or other, is admitted by all who believe the bible. In the lesson above, we have briefly exhibited what we conceive to be the scriptural account of the election of grace: and which we define to be, *the eternal and unchangeable purpose and design of God, to save in Christ a definite number of the fallen race of Adam—and that, not on account of any good works done by them, or any good quality foreseen in them, but of his own sovereign pleasure.* As election, however, in its highest or lowest sense, whether national or individual, whether to

temperal or eternal blessings, is but one feature of the great purpose of God in the creation and government of the world; and as that, which is true of the whole subject, is equally true of all its specific forms, we submit the following upon the general subject. And,

FIRST. THE PURPOSE OF GOD DEMONSTRATED. It does, indeed, seem wonderful, that men need to be convinced, that God is a Being of purpose: and seeing he is possessed of all power, wisdom, and goodness, they should need to be persuaded, that he could purpose nothing, which will not be promotive of the highest good to an intelligent universe, and that no event can take place contrary to that purpose. But since the depravity of our nature is such as to render proof necessary, it may be deduced

(1) *From his fore-knowledge.* "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, things not yet done," (Acts xv, 18. Is. xxxxvi, 9, 10.) From these and similar expressions with which the scriptures abound, it must be conceded, that God fore-sees with absolute certainty every event connected with his creatures, both in this world, and the next: and since it were a contradiction in terms, to say that he fore-knows an event as certain, which might not occur, there must be an infallible certainty attending the occurrence of every event, which he fore-sees will take place. This certainty, how-

ever, does not lie in his fore-knowledge, nor in any wise result from it. Fore-knowledge, which is only a previous recognition of an event yet to transpire, does of itself no more render an event certain, than does after-knowledge. To account for this certainty, then, we are obliged to admit, either the heathen law of fatal necessity, or the purpose of an infinitely wise, and holy God. The absurdity of the former, brings us inevitably to the latter.

(2) *From his universal agency in the moral world.* "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself" —"Man's goings are of the Lord:" "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps"—The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithesoever he will"—"The most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and appointeth over it whomsoever he will"—"There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God"—"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord"—"It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. (Jer. x, 23. Pro. xx, 24. *ib.* xvi, 9. *ib.* xxi, 1. Dan: v, 21. Rom. xiii, 1. Ps. xxxvii, 23. Phil. ii, 13.) The sentiment contained in these divine declarations seems to be this, that, however different may be its modes, yet as to the fact itself, the control which the deity exercises over the moral and political world, is not less absolute than that which he exercises over the material universe: and there are, perhaps, seasons in the life of eve-

ry pious man, when he, not only acknowledges this in prayer, but from thence also derives strong support and consolation in trial and misfortune. But if it is allowed that God directs the affairs of the moral world, he must do so, either according to whim and caprice; or according to some established purpose, and to the attainment of wise and holy ends. The absurdity of the former, brings us inevitably to the latter.

(3) *From express declarations of scripture.* The scriptures do, indeed, detail only the leading events of the divine providence: but as these were dependant upon the intervention of means and second causes; therefore, the intermediate occurrences must have been certain, in the same manner as their final results. Now it is beyond dispute, that God did purpose and determine the leading facts of the old world: for example, that Joseph should be sold into Egypt: (Gen. l, 20: the conduct of Pharaoh towards the Israelites: (Ex. ix, 16. Rom. ix, 17:) the opposition of the Canaanitish nations to the Jews: (Josh. xi, 20:) the obstinacy of the sons of Eli to their destruction: (1 Sam. ii, 25:) the invasion of Egypt and the "holy land" by the King of Assyria: (Is. xix, 17. *ib.* x, 5–7:) the seventy years captivity of the Jews in Babylon: (Jer. xxv, 11:) and their emancipation by Cyrus the King of the Medes: (Is. xxxxiv, 28. Jer. xxv, 12–14:) the time, and place, and manner of the birth and death of Christ: (Dan. ix, 24, 25. Math. i, 18–23, *ib.* ii, 5, 6. Gel. iv, 4. Luke xxii, 22. Acts ii, 23. *ib.* iv, 28.) The

invasion of Jerusalem by the Roman army with all their horrid desolations: (Dan. ix, 26, 27:) the establishment and perpetuity of the christain church: (Eph. iii, 10, 11:) the apostacy, and the rise of the man of sin: (2 Thes. ii, 3:) in a word, the times, residences, and all the events of every man's life. (Job vii, 1–3. *ib.* xiv. 5. *ib.* xx, 29. Acts xvii, 26. 1 Thes. v, 9. 1 Pet. ii, 8. Acts i, 25. Jude 4.) It is confidently believed that a careful examination of the numerous references will sufficiently satisfy the impartial reader: and if any should still be disposed to believe the opposite, there will be ground to fear that God hath sent them strong delusion that they should believe a lie. (1 Thes. ii, 11.)

SECONDLY. THE PURPOSE OF GOD QUALIFIED.

(1) *It is eternal.* The design of God in the creation and government of the universe, was the manifestation of his own glory. (Rev. iv. 11.) This design necessarily embraced both his natural and moral perfections—the former of which, are unfolded in the extent and variety of creation: (Ps. viii, 3, 4. *ib.* xix, 1. *ib.* civ, 24. *ib.* cxxxv, 10. Rom. i, 20:) and the latter, in the dispensations of his providence towards this lower world. (Ps. xi, 16, *ib.* lxxxv, 10. *ib.* lxxxii, 6, 7. Rom. xi, 22. Eph. iii, 10. In the execution of this design, God has pursued that plan, which in the estimation of his own omniscience was the best adapted to the end contemplated: and it must be obvious to every one who admits the omniscence

of God, that whatever reason has existed at any period to determine his conduct in any case, the same, with all its force was beheld by him from eternal ages. Accordingly, we are positively assured, that the purpose of the deity with regard to his church—that sublimest establishment for the display of his moral perfections, and for whose promotion, mainly, he exercises continual and special superintendence over the whole moral and physical universe—that his purpose with regard to his church was formed and matured in the unfathonable depths of eternity. "To the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii, 10, 11.)

(2) *It is sovereign, absolute, and unchangeable.* God does nothing without a reason: nevertheless, he does not always see fit to give that reason to his creatures. (Job xxxiii, 13. Pro. xxv, 2.) Why he chose to develope his natural perfections by one method, and his moral perfections by another—why he chose to display his justice by one instrument, and his mercy by a different one. (Rom. xi, 22,) why he chose of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and the other unto dishonor. (Rom. ix, 21–23;) why he chose the same characters to appoint some to wrath, and others to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ: (1 Thes. v, 9. 2 Pet. ii, 8) in all this, there were doubtless sufficient reasons to justify the divine

conduct: to us, however the only reason that appears, is because "thus it seemeth good in thy sight O Lord." (Math. xi, 25, 26.) That the purpose of God in these things, (and the world is full of analagous events) is sovereign, absolute, and immutable, all are obliged to allow: especially, when we remember what the scriptures abundantly teach, that our election to eternal life, was not so much on acccount of any good works done by us, or any good quality foreseen in us more than others, as that these latter are the result of our appointment to salvation—according to what is written, "we love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv, 19. John xv, 16. Acts xiii, 48. Rom. viiii, 29. Eph. i, 4, 5, 11. 2 Thes. ii, 13. 2Tim. 1, 9. 1 Pet. i, 2.

(3) *In election it is personal and definite.* There is a sense in which, as we have seen, the divine fore know is universal, extending to all persons and events: but seeing it is said, "whom he fore-knowledge he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii, 29, 30:) there must be a sense also in which it is special, and extending only to those who shall ultimately be saved. (Math. vii. 23.) Farther, since it is said in Math. xx, 16. *ib.* xxii, 14, that "many are called, but few chosen," and above, "whom he called them he also glorified;" there must be sense in which the divine call

is special, reaching to such only as shall be eventully glorified. Now a special fore-knowledge and a special calling evidently import definiteness: and as these are seen to relate to the identical individuals who are predestinated, therefore, predestination and election must be personal. Accordingly, we have the following scriptures: "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me"—"I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen"—"He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world"—"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation"—"Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (John vi, 37, *ib.* xiii, 18. Eph. i, 4. 2 Thes. ii, 13. Rom. xi, 15.)

Thirdly. THE PURPOSE OF GOD HARMONIZED (1) *With the divine impartiality.* A respecter of persons is one who grounds his partiality upon some worldly or external contingency. (Acts x, 34, 35. James ii, 1–4.) But we have shown that the divine election to eternal life, so far from recognizing such petty distinctions, does not even proceed upon the ground of any goodness of character of which we may boast—that whatever reason influenced the divine determination, it was not found in man—that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." (Rom. ix, 16.) There is, therefore, as much reason to suppose the potter partial, when, from the same lump, he makes one vessel unto an honorable use, and another to a

dishonorable use, as there is to imagine partiality in God, when he appoints some to salvation rather than others.

(2) *With the voluntary agency of men.* A free agent is one who wills or chooses, and who has the power to follow his incliations; and to show any discrepancy between the absolute purpose of God, and the utmost freedom of human agency, it were necessary to evince, that the purpose of God does in some wise incapacitate men for choosing, or for doing that which they choose. This, it is believed, cannot be shown. In the examples specified above, (and many others similar might be added) nothing is more manifest, than, while in every instance the divine purpose was literally executed, the persons by whom it was done, were to the fullest extent voluntary, and followers of the desires and intents of their own hearts. The truth is, the scriptures not only represent the divine *purpose* as compatible with free agency; but even the divine *agency itself*, "working all things in us after the counsel of his own will," as the ground and cause of our free agency. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for, (or because) it is God, that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." (Phil. ii, 12, 13.) This, too, is perfectly consonant with our daily experience. We breathe, walk, speak and do all things, because the divine power working in us, enables us thus to do.

(3) *With the use of means.* The divine government is one of instrumentalities. The means

necessary to accomplish his designs, were as absolutely ordained as were the ends to be answered. Nay, according to his wise and holy purpose, the same events often occupy the relation of both means and ends—ends with reference to the past, but means with regard to the future. Witness the case of Joseph, of Pharaoh, and others before mentioned. It was not simply purposed that Joseph should be sold into Egypt; but that thereby "much people should be saved alive." Nor was it the ultimatum of God's purpose that Pharaoh's heart should be hardened; but, that thus, the divine glory might be displayed in a miraculous deliverance of his chosen people. No purpose of the deity is more absolute than that which relates to the term of man's life. "His days are determined, the number of his months is with God; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." (Job xiv. 5, *ib.* vii, 1.) Nevertheless, no one considers, that, for this reason, means to preserve life are wholly unnecessary; or that he may disregard the necessary means for this purpose. And thus in the gospel, God has absolutely and infallibly ordained the salvation of some; and the means necessary to the end—repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ—is a part of that absolute purpose and indispensable to be observed. In harmony with this, none have been more distinguished for active piety, than the eminent St. Paul, whose strong language, on this sublime doctrine, has staggered many a weak mind, and which the ungodly "wrest, as they do

also the other scriptures to their own destruction." (2 Pet. iii, 16.)

LESSON XXXXVIII.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

QUESTION. The subject next to be considered, after the *plan* and *purpose* of redeeming mercy, is the perseverance of the saints. What do you understand by the final perseverance of the saints?

ANSWER. The final perseverance of the saints, is a patient continuance in well-doing, seeking for glory, and honor, and immortality, to eternal life. Rom. ii, 7. Phil. iii, 12–17. 2 Pet. i, 5–11.

Q Is it your opinion, that they who have been regenerated and become christians by the effectual operation of God, will thus persevere and be saved?

A Yes. Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. i, 6. *ib.* ii, 12, 13.

Q Why are you thus confident, that God, having begun a good work in the soul, will not leave it unfinished, and permit the christian to perish at last?

A Because, thus saith the Lord, I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Jer. xxxii, 40. *ib.* xxxi, 31–34.

Q Does this everlasting covenant embrace all the events through which the christian shall pass in life?

A Yes. David said, God hath made with me an everlating covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: and this is all my salvation, and all my desire. 2 Sam. xxiii, 5. Is. lv, 3. Heb. viii, 10–12. *ib.* x, 14-18.

Q Are we to understand from hence, that the christian is entirely exempted from temptation, so that he cannot possibly fall into sin, even great sin?

A No. But though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. Ps. xxxviii, 24. *ib.* lxxxix. 30–34. Pro: xxiv, 16. Mic. vii, 8. Luke xxi, 31-32. 1 Cor. x, 13. Heb. vi, 8. *ib.* x, 39.

Q Is it not, however, a matter of fact, that many, who have professed to be christians, and for a time given good evidence of it, have finally fallen away and died in apostacy?

A Yes. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not of us. 1 John ii, 19. Ps. 1, 4. Math. vii, 21–23. *ib.* xiii, 20, 21. *ib.* xxv, 3. John vi, 70, 71. Acts i, 25. 1 Cor. xi, 9. 1 Tim. i, 20. 2 Tim. ii, 17–19. Heb. x, 38. 2 Pet. ii, 22.

Q But did not God, even after he had actually saved the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, subsequently destroy large numbers of them in the wilderness?

A Yes. And because of unbelief they were broken off; but thou standest by faith. Rom. xi, 20. Heb. iii, 9–12. 2 Cor. 5, 7. Eph. ii, 8.

Q For what purpose were these things written, if the real christian cannot also fall away and be lost?

A They were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, to the intent that we should labor lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. 1 Cor. x, 11. Heb. iv, 11.

Q Do you, then, consider all the warnings and cautions on this subject, as intended to lead us to self-examination, watchfulness, and prayer, lest after all we should not be christians?

A. Yes. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves; and let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 Cor. xiii, 5. Heb. iv, 1. 1 Pet. i, 17.

Q What is the most infallible evidence of real christianity in the soul?

A We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast our confidence steadfast unto the end. Heb. iii, 14. Math. vii, 15–20. John xv, 6. Rom. vi, 16. Heb. iii, 6. 1 John i, 7. James i, 22–7.

Q Does the perseverance of the saints depend upon the constancy and strength of their own pious efforts?

A No. But ye are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. 1 Pet. i, 5. Ps. cxxi, 2–8. John x, 27–29.

Q If, then, the power of God is engaged to keep his people, must it not be impossible that any thing should overthrow and destroy them?

A Yes. I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii, 38, 39. Eph. i, 21, 22. Col. i, 16–18.

Q. But is it not dangerous to the interests of the soul, that men should believe this doctrine?

A. No. We know, that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is: and every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 1 John iii, 2, 3. 1 Cor. ix, 27. 2 Cor. v, 1, 9.

Q What peculiar advantage can result from the admission that the real christian cannot ultimately perish?

A God willing to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who had fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Heb. vi, 17–18. John vi, 57. *ib.* xiv, 1–3, 19.

REMARKS.

We have defined the perseverance of the saints, to be "a patient continuance in well-doing, seeking

for glory, and honor, and immortality, to eternal life." In this, however, it is neither pretended, that all who profess to be christians are such in reality; nor that the real christian may not occasionally do wrong, or even greatly so;—it is pretended neither that the perseverance of the saints depends alone upon their "power and holiness;" nor yet that any will be saved, who do not endure to the end. We intend, simply, that the continual superintendence and grace of God will be vouchsafed unto them in such measure and manner as to render their salvation certain, through faith and obedience: and we subjoin the following, as additional evidence of this doctrine.

First. *The purpose of God in the provisions of grace.* If the believer is not ultimately saved, it can result from no inadequacy in the means provided for his complete and final redemption. An atonement of ample capacity has been made, whose efficacious power extends commensurate with all the aggravations and enormities of sin. Next to this, God hath sent forth his almighty Spirit to take of the things of Christ, and render them effectual, by enlightening the understanding, renovating the heart and sanctifying the affections—thus befitting the soul for the felicities of heaven. To this, it may be added, he has bestowed upon his people a volume of inspired counsels and cautions, premonitions and promises of the most benign and salutary influence; and has, moreover, instituted a class of men, whose primary business it shall be, to the end of time, to watch over the

spiritual interests of his saints, "till they all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." These provisions, abundant and saving in their character, had their origin in the sovereign good-will of God, and were conferred upon his chosen wholly irrespective of merit in them: nor can it be denied, that God had in view, by them, to save a portion of the human race or that his infinite wisdom and power will render that purpose certain. But it must appear obvious, that whatever certainty attends the divine purpose in this case, must in like manner attend the final perseverance of the saints.

SECONDLY. *The promise made to Christ in the covenant of redemption.* "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore, will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips." Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before

me." (Is. liii, 10–12. Ps. lxxxix, 34–36.) That these promises refer directly to the case before us, will not be questioned by the impartial reader; and they unequivocally assert, that in consideration of the vicarious death and intercession, Christ should receive a "seed," who should be "justified" and "endure forever." The guaranty of these promises was the immutable oath of the Holy God: and in Is. ix, 7. *ib.* lxix, 7, it is said with equal emphasis that the "zeal" of "God that is faithful" will fulfil them. It was, therefore, with the utmost confidence, that Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me:" "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John vi, 37. *ib.* x, 29.) But this confidence was vain if perseverance of the saints is not absolutely certain.

THIRDLY. *The promises made to the believer in the covenant of grace.* The covenant of grace is, properly, a promissory pledge or assurance gratuitously given to the believer by the blessed God, that he will do, or cause to be done, all things necessary to the present and eternal good of his people. Among its specific and immediate blessings, may be instanced the pardon of sins, justification, adoption, and a felicitous control and direction of providence: and whether we consider this covenant as a whole, or with reference to its specific benefits, it is absolute and final. "I will make with them an everlasting covenant, saith God, that I will not turn away from them,

to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me"—"I will be their God, and they shall be my people"—and I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." (Jer. xxxii, 40, *ib.* xxxi, 33, 34. Heb. x, 16, 17.) After the same manner also, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." "For this is the will of him that sent me, that every ene which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." "As the living Father hath sent me, and as I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." (John v, 24, *ib.* vi, 40, 57.) To render these promises infallibly certain, we are furthermore assured, that Christ hath been exalted head over all things, both in heaven and earth to the church, and that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"—that "no evil shall befall them"—that "with every temptation, he will make a way of escape." (Eph. i, 22. Rom. viii, 28. Ps. xci, 10. 1 Cor. x, 13.) If, then, the perseverance of the saints is not certain and final, there must be a failure both of the promise and the providence of God.

FOURTHLY. *The character of those who apostatize.* We feel no disposition to conceal the fact, that many who profess christianity, and for

a time give evidence of real piety, do afterwards fall away and die in the midst of nefarious wickedness: but, it certainly discovers great want of candour, or great want of familiarity with the scriptures, to infer from hence, that a real christian may finally apostatize and be lost. The solution of this difficulty will be found in a careful examination of the criteria of christian character as defined in the word of God. Of these criteria, one of the leading is a firm, steadfast, and continuous pursuit of divine things. "Christ, as a Son, is faithful over his house: whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. iii. 6, 14.) Hence also, the righteous are represented as "planted in the house of the Lord,"—as "swearing to their own hurt and changing not"—as having "their heart fixed, trusting in the Lord." (Ps. xcii, 13, *ib.* xv. 4, *ib.* cxii, 7.) On the contrary, the unstable, indeterminate, and those who turn away, are represented as being ungodly, and really unfit for the kingdom of heaven. Thus, for example: "The ungodly are like the chaff, which the wind driveth away"—"He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he which heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet, hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven." (Ps. i, 4. Math. xiii,

20, 21. Luke ix, 62.) It is, therefore, most evident, that immovableness, steadfastness, principle, purpose, and perseverence, enter essentially into christian character; and, that where the former are not, the latter is wanting also. Accordingly, the apostle John found no difficulty in deciding, that apostates were not christians: (1 John ii, 19) nor St. Paul in saying, "We are not of them, who draw back unto perdition; but of them which believe to the saving of the soul." (Heb. x, 39.)

From this lesson, we infer,

(1) *The strength of the christian's hope and consolation.* "Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?—Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." (Ps. xlii, 11.) "All things are yours"—whether the Atonement, or the Holy Spirit, or the gospel, or the ministry, or the promises, or the providences of God,—all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. "All things work together for our good"—"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii, 38, 39.)

(2) *The strong ground of the christian's fear.* Art thou a christian? Hast thou been regenera-

ted and born again? Examine thyself, whether thou art in the faith. "Know ye not, that to whomsoever ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?—whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things have passed away: behold all things have become new." "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (Rom. vi, 16. 2 Cor. v, 17. Heb. iii, 14. 1 Cor. xv, 58.) Let us labour, as though our salvation depended alone upon us; and trust in God, as though we had done nothing.

LESSON XXXIX.

DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION.

Q. There are but two classes of persons in the world—the righteous and the wicked: what is said of the manner of their death?

A. The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death. Pro. xiv, 32, *ib.* xi, 7. Num. xxiii. 10. Rev. xiv, 13.

Q. When men die do their souls and bodies perish together?

A. No. The body shall return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God, who gave it. Eccl. xii, 7. Gen. iii, 19. Job xxxiv, 15. Eccl. iii, 21. Acts vii, 59.

Q. Into what condition do the souls of men pass after death?

A. The souls of the righteous are happy after death: but those of the wicked go into torment: as in the case of the rich man and Lazarus.—Luke xvi, 19–25.

Q. Will not the bodies of men be eventually raised up, and united with their souls in happiness or misery, as they were also in sin or holiness?

A. Yes. The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. John v, 28, 29. Dan. xii, 2. Acts xxiv, 15. Rev. xx, 13.

Q. At what period will this event take place?

A. The resurrection of the dead will take place in the end of the world, at the last day. John xi, 24. Luke xix. 12–27. 2 Thes. ii, 1–3.

Q. Will the bodies of men, in the resurrection, be subjected to all their present, mortal weaknesses?

A. No. In death, the body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. 1 Cor. xv, 42–44.

Q. After the resurrection, will the same relations exist, as in this world?

A. No. In the resurrection, men neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven. Math. xxii, 30.

Q. Was the doctrine of the resurrection and a future state known and believed by the Old Testament saints?

A. Yes. Job said, I know, that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall

behold, and not another. Job xix, 25–27. See also Ex. iii, 6, comp'd Math. xxii, 27. Ps. lxix, 15. Is. xxvi, 19. Ezek. xxxvii, 10. Dan. xii, 2. Hos. xiii, 14. Acts xxvi, 6–8. Heb. vi, 2. *ib.* xi, 9, 10, 22, 35.

REMARKS.

First. *The certainty of the resurrection.* The resurrection of the dead, is strictly a scriptural doctrine. The heathen philosophers, however they believed the immortality of the *soul* and a *future state*, yet entertained no apprehensions that, when once the *body* had returned to corruption, it would ever be again resuscitated, and made to live. The analogy of nature; the retributive character of the divine government; (2 Cor. v, 10,) and the resurrection of Christ, are, indeed, its irrefragable evidences: (1 Cor. xv, 12–14;) but it is consonant to reason, that being ignorant of the two last, they should have entirely overlooked the first. Hence, when the apostle, in the midst of the learned court of the Areopagites, proclaimed this doctrine, he was denounced as a "babler," and a propagator of "strange things." Nevertheless, it is set forth as one of "the first principles of the oracles of God:" (Heb. vi, 2,) and this applies equally to the scriptures of the Old or New Testament. The intelligent and candid student of the bible, need not be told, that it was taught by Moses and the prophets as a special "hope promised to the fathers." (Acts xxvi, 6–8) nor yet, that

it was held, centuries before, by Abraham and Job, as an abiding antidote, to affliction, sorrow and care. Under both dispensations, the prospect of a "better resurrection," was, to the saints of the Most High, a never failing solace amid the fires of persecution: (Heb. xi, 35,) and upon no other principle is it possible to explain the directions given by the ancients, respecting their mortal remains. (Heb. xi, 22.)

SECONDLY. *The agent in the resurrection.* The curious and inquisitive mind, interposes two difficulties to the resurrection of the dead:—the one, arising from the vast population of the globe; and the other, in connexion with personal identity. With what bodies shall these all come forth? and where shall they stand in the last day? To questions of this character, it were, perhaps, sufficient to reply, that an instance of mysteries is not a satisfactory refutation of authenticated facts. The most common and every-day occurrences of life, are replete with wonders, not less insolvable by the human mind than the greatest embarrassments which are supposed to attend the resurrection of the dead. "No man knoweth any thing yet as he ought to know it." Especially, "ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." (Math. xxii, 29.) Did the scriptures represent, that the same organized and material bodies which are originally intered, should be again raised up, and made to occupy the ærial heavens, (1 Thes. iv, 17,) a right appreciation of the divine attributes; and a proper reverence

for the divine holiness and truth, would silence every doubt that it should be done. How much less, however, may we question this fundamental doctrine, when we are assured, that, while an identity adequate to all governmental purposes will be strictly maintained, the substances of these bodies shall be so far changed as to admit no embarrassment arising from locality and the contiguity of other substances. The divine power will be specially concerned in the resurrection of the dead; and he will give to every one a body as it pleaseth him; and to every one his own body. (1 Cor. xv, 38.) This body, we are taught shall be incorruptible and spiritual: nor can it be denied that the divine energy is infinitely competent to this wonderful event. "It is God that raiseth the dead."

LESSON XL.

THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

QUESTION. What event will take place next after death and the resurrection?

ANSWER. It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment. Heb. ix, 27.

Q Does God pass a final sentence upon every man at the hour of death; or is there a day of special and formal judgment appointed?

A God hath appointed a (special) day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he raised him from the dead. Acts xvii, 31. Math. x, 15. *ib.* xii, 36. 1 Cor. v, 5. 2 Cor. i, 14. 1 Thes. v, 2. 2 Pet. ii, 4, 9. *ib.* iii, 7, 10. 1 John iv, 17. Jude 6.

Q Will God the Father, or God the Son, act as judge in that day?

A The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment to the Son: and he gave him this authority to execute judgment, because he was the Son of man; (or because he humbled himself.) John v, 22, 27. Acts x, 42. Rom. xiv, 10–12. 2 Cor. v, 10. Phil. ii, 6–11. 2 Tim. iv, 1.

Q In what manner will Jesus Christ be revealed, when he shall come to judge the world?

A The Son of man will come in the glory of his Father, attended with thousands of holy angels: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. Math. xvi, 27.

Ps. l, 3. Dan. vii, 9, 10. Acts i, 11. 1 Thes. iv, 16. 2 Thes. i, 7–10, Rev. i, 7.

Q Who will be the subjects of judgment, when Christ shall come in his glory?

A When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations—the dead, both small and great shall stand before God. Math. xxv, 31, 32. Rev. xx, 12. Ps. v, 4, 5.

Q Will not the fallen angels, also, be brought before the judgment seat of Christ, that they may receive a formal and public condemnation?

A Yes. And the angels, which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Jude vi. Math. viii, 29. 2 Pet. ii, 4.

Q Will the righteous and the wicked stand together, in the judgment, in one vast and mingled multitude as in this life; or will the judge separate them, preparatory to final condemnation or acquittal?

A The judge shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: for the ungodly shall not stand in the

judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. Math. xxv, 32. Ps. i, 5.

Q After the subjects of judgment shall have been thus separated, will the judge pass sentence upon them in mass; or will he decide upon the works of every one individually and separately?

A Every one of us shall give account of himself to God: and he will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Rom. xiv, 12. Eccl. xii, 14. Jer. xvii, 10. Math. xii, 36. *ib.* xxv. 35–45. 1 Cor. iv, 5.

Q Will the judge, in that day, have any respect to the personal circumstances and standing of men; or will he judge them strictly according to the character of their works, as recorded in the court of heaven?

A He shall not judge after the sight of the eyes, nor after the hearing of the ears: but the books will be opened, and another book will be opened which is the book of life: and the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works. Is. xi, 3. Rev. xx, 12. Dan. vii, 10. Acts xvii, 13. Rom. ii. 2, 16. Mal. iii, 16, 17.

Q What will the judge say to the righteous, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life?

A Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Math. xxv, 34. Ps. l, 5, 6. Mal. iii, 17. Math. x, 32. *ib.* xix. 28, 29. Rom. ii, 6, 7, 33–39. 1 Cor. iii, 12–15. 2 Pet. 1, 11. 1 John iii, 2.

Q What sentence will he pronounce upon the ungodly and the sinner, who neglected the great salvation which was offered them.

A Then shall he say also unto them on his left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Math. xxv, 41. Ps. xi. 6. Pro. i, 24–32. Mal. iv, 1. Math. iii, 12. Mark viii, 38. Rom. ii, 8, 9. 2 Thes. i, 8, 9. 2 P. iii, 7.

Q Should not the prospect of this certain and fearful judgment make us exceedingly diligent and strict in preparing to meet God?

A Yes. Beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. 2 Pet. iii, 14. Amos. iv, 12.

REMARKS.

Antecedent to the great assize of the world, and, perhaps commencing with the seven thou-

sandth year, the prophetic scriptures allude to a period of millenial glory, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the great deep;" and when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." After this a short term of apostacy shall elapse, during which the powers of darkness, with unwonted zeal and virulence, shall lead captive unwary and unstable souls. The undefined length of this "little season," is that which envelopes the precise period of the judgment in doubt and uncertainty. "The day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." (1 Thes. v, 2, 3.) Nevertheless, remark,

First. *The certainty of the general judgment.* The retributions of the last day, are ordinarily grounded upon the justice of God; the veracity of God; the resurrection of Christ; and the analogy of the present world: (Ro. ii, 1-3. Gal. vi, 7, 8,) and it must be confessed that these are evidences of an invincible character. To us, however, it has long appeared, that the *mercy of God* is an additional argument of no mean consideration. It is the province of mercy to protect the weak and the defenceless, from the insults and cruelties of the strong and the insolent: and whether the mighty are found invested with the authority of a husband, a father, a master, a judge, or a tyrannical ruler,

it stands to reason and truth, that the divine mercy should revenge the wrongs they inflict. This argument cumulates with the emphasis of those interdictions by which the oppressed and persecuted, in these several relations, are prohibited from avenging themselves. Indeed, it were not less difficult to harmonize with the justice than the mercy of God, that men should be required to patiently submit to indignities, which they often possess the physical capacity to "resist," if, notwithstanding, they are left without any assurance that the wrongs which they suffer will, in the day of recompence, be visited upon the head of their perpetrators. "But unto thee O Lord belongeth mercy; for thou renderest to every man according to his works." Ps. lxii, 12. (Rev. vi, 9–11.)

SECONDLY. *The character of the general judgment.* It will be strict, impartial, and final.

(1) *It will be strict and impartial.* It has been elsewhere observed, that wealth, intelligence, opportunities, personal or family character and influence, invest men with responsibilties: and, as in every case these in all their degrees, are distinctly understood by the divine mind, so, they will constitute the measure of the divine requisitions. This principle will extend to every rational creature—whether angels or men, whether Jew or Gentile, whether christian or anti-christian. The same condition of moral character, will be demanded in every instance of like circumstances. An unequal improvement with equal advantages, or an equal piety and usefulness, with unequal advanta-

ges, will be attended with like inequalities in the retributions of the last day. It will not merely be a question what men were and did; but what they might have been, and what they should have done. That Nero was not such an one as Paul—that many in our times are not christians, will not be so much an extenuation of their criminal impiety, as it will be the ground of their condemnation. Nor will it be sufficient, that we did as much as our neighbor in the cause of Christ. But the question will be, what were the proportions between our capacities and opportunities. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." (Luke xii, 48. Math. xxv, 14–30.)

(2) *It will be final.* A slight attention in the *physical condition* of men will intervene death and the judgment. In the administrations of rewards and punishments, reference must, of course, be had to the identical persons by whom the several acts were committed, and which are to be approved or condemned. From hence arises the necessity of the resurrection of the body, and its reunion with the soul—that, those members which were partakers in the guilt or innocence, may be also in their appropriate rewards. This, however implies no similar change in the *moral character* of those who will be assembled at the tribunal of God. The complexions of soul with which every man comes to his grave, will attend him at the bar of his judge; and it is worthy of especial remark, that the apostle demonstrates this an "eternal judgment." (Heb. vi, 2.) The decisions of

that day will be graven in monuments as durable as eternity itself; and irreversible, will extend their doom commensurate with unending ages. They will form a period in the annals of the universe, beyond which no event will transpire to militate the hopeless lot of the damned, or to pollute the swelling joys of the redeemed. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." "The former, shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the latter, into life eternal." (Rev. xxii, 11. Math. xxv, 46.)

THIRDLY. *The lesson of the general judgment.* It is a strange advantage, which the adversary takes of the uncertain period of death and the judgment to induce a postponement of all preparations to meet God at his coming. Nor is it less absurd than real. If it is not absolutely certain, that we shall die in a year or even many years; it is equally so, that we may die in a month or a day. And are we still secure? Is it possible, that walking in the midst of such a whirl of alarming uncertainties, we should feel no solicitude? Seeing we look for such fearful things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Be ye therefore ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the son of man cometh." (2 Pet. iii, 11. Math. xxiv, 44.)

LESSON XLI.

HEAVEN.

QUESTION. Into what place will the righteous enter after the judgment?

ANSWER. The righteous shall go away into everlasting life. For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Math. xxv, 46. 2 Cor. v, 1. John xiv. 1–3.

Q. Will not the righteous be permitted to behold the face of God in heaven, and dwell in his society forever?

A Yes. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Rev. xxi, 3. Math. v, 8. John xii, 26. *ib.* xvii, 24.

Q What is said of the happiness, which the presence of God inspires in the souls of the righteous?

A In his presence there is fulness of joy; and

at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Ps. xvi, 11. *ib.* xvii, 15. *ib.* xxi, 6. *ib.* xxxvi, 8.

Q Will the pleasures of the redeemed, in the world to come, be alloyed by persecution, affliction, care and labor, as in this life?

A No. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. Rev. xxi, 4. *ib.* vii, 16, 17. Job. iii, 17. Is. xxxv, 10.

Q What will constitute the chief employment of the righteous, in their heavenly existence?

A They will stand before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. Rev. vii, 15. *ib.* iii, 12. *ib.* iv, 6–11.

Q Will they not be made completely holy, and fitted to derive pleasure from this divine employment?

A Yes. It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is, and I shall be satisfied when I awake in his likeness. John iii, 2. Ps. xvii, 15. Rev. vii, 9–14. *ib.* xix, 8.

Q What is said of the knowledge which the

righteous shall possess of the character and government of God, in the world above?

A Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known. 1 Cor. xiii, 12. John xiii, 7.

Q Will not a part of the happiness of heaven arise from the recognition of friends, who have also been redeemed?

A Yes. We shall know our friends who are saved, even as Abraham and Lazarus knew each other; and this will contribute much to the happiness of heaven.

Q. What peculiar honours will the Lord confer upon the saints in the world to come, over and above what you have stated?

A. Henceforth, there is laid up for us a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give us at that day: and not to us only, but unto all them also, that love his appearing. 2 Tim. iv, 8. Luke xxii, 29, 30. Rom. v, 17. Rev. i, 5, *ib.* xxii, 5.

Q. Do not the scriptures teach that there will be different degrees of glory and blessedness in heaven, corresponding to the piety and usefulness of the present life?

A. Yes. They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; but they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. Dan xii, 3. Luke xix, 16–19. 1 Cor. iii, 14, 15, *ib.* xv, 41, 42. 2 Cor. ix, 6.

Q. What influence should this doctrine have upon our conduct?

A. Therefore, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. xv, 58.

REMARKS.

Whatever else may contribute to the felicities of heaven—as the society of angels; the recognition of friends; and a perpetual increase of knowledge: yet, they will arise, mainly, from the presence of God; the assimilation to God; and the uninterrupted worship of God for ever. And we remark,

First, *The proportions of heavenly glory.*—That there will be different degrees of glory in the future state; is consonant to reason and the analogy of the divine providence in the present world. With a sovereignty that gives no account of his matters to any, God has variously endowed men with capacities, and assigned them different vocations and duties. Men sustain these several relations with varieties of faithfulness and

success: nor can it be denied, that it is a fundamental law of the moral universe, that the present measure of fidelity shall be the foundation of farther promotion in future. That, however, which reason renders thus probable, divine revelation has placed beyond all manner of dispute.—Here we are assured with sacred emphasis, that the guilt or innocence of men admits of every variety of degree, and shall be attended with every variety of praise or blame—that whatever tends to aggravate their criminality shall in like manner, enhance their misery; and whatever tends to heighten their virtue, shall be also followed with corresponding tokens of the divine approbation. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead." "This I say, that he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." "For he shall reward every man according to his works." (1 Cor. xv, 41, 42. 2 Cor. ix, 6. Math. xvi, 27.)

SECONDLY. *The fulness of the heavenly glory.* The highest degrees of earthly happiness are exceedingly short lived and unsatisfying. The ambitious conquests of the Emperor, and the extatic discoveries of the Philosopher, as completely fail to satiate the ever varying desires of the human mind, as do the sordid acquisitions of the miser.—There is a vast capaciousness in the endless cravings of the soul within, which can be filled with

nought inferior to God and eternity. In these alone, the panting spirit finds a good, commensurate with all her wants, with all her wishes, and with all her powers. To look with unbeclouded vision upon the ineffable effulgence of the divine glory—to bask in the bright beams of his paternal love—to feast on the hidden manna prepared for the saints in light, and to quaff the crystal fountain that flows from beneath the throne of God—these will converge an eternity of bliss into every fleeting moment, beyond which the most enlarged capacities of our most exalted nature can feel no desires. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. vii, 16, 17.)

THIRDLY. *The free grace of heavenly glory.* Salvation, from beginning to end, is of pure unmerited grace. It was grace that conceived the purpose; grace that devised the scheme; and grace that executes the work. The human mind had been alike unable to imagine, or the human powers, to merit, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Had man retained his pristine innocence, the highest privileges to which abstract justice had entitled him, had been a mere exemption from punishment. How much less now that he has fallen, and now that his best performances are defaced with a thousand shades

of sin and weakness! To acquit the guilty of their sins, and reward with glory, and honor and bliss, the works which he himself hath wrought in us, as though we had done him essential service, is an instance of condescending goodness in God, that may well excite the undying song of "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor and power, and might unto our God for ever and ever: and let all flesh say Amen." (Rev. vii, 12.)

LESSON XLII.

HELL.

QUESTION. Will the wicked go into heaven with the righteous?

ANSWER. No. There shall in no-wise enter into heaven any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. Rev. xxi, 27. Math. v, 20. *ib.* vii, 21–23. Luke xiii, 24–27. 1 Cor. vi, 9, 10. Gal. v, 19–21. Eph. v, 5. Rev. xxii, 15.

Q What then will become of the unrighteous after the judgment?

A They that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Thes. i, 8, 9. Ps. l, 21, 22. Prov. xxix, 1. Math. xxv, 41. Rom. ix, 22. Phil. iii, 18, 19. 1 Thes. v, 3. 2 Thes. ii, 8, 12. Heb. x, 25–29. 2 Pet. ii, 9, 12. *ib.* iii, 7.

Q Into what place will all the ungodly be collected and punished?

A The wicked shall be turned into hell with all nations that forget God. Ps. 9, 17. Is. xiv, 9. Math. iii, 10. *ib.* v, 29, 30. *ib.* x, 28. *ib.* xxiii, 29–33. Luke xvi, 22, 23.

Q What strong language do the scriptures employ to represent the horrible and intense sufferings of sinners in the world to come?

A Upon the wicked God shall rain snares, fire and brimestone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. Ps. xi, 6. Is. xxx, 33. *ib.* xxxiii, 14. *ib.* lxvi, 15. Jer. iv, 3, 4. Mal. iv, 1. Math. v, 22. *ib.* xiii, 40–42, *ib.* xxv, 41. Rev. xiv, 9, 10. *ib.* xix, 20. *ib.* xx, 10, 14, 15. *ib.* xxi, 8.

Q How long will the wicked be punished in the fire of hell?

A These shall go away into everlasting punishment; their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; but the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest, day nor night. Math. xxv, 46, Is. lxvi, 24. Rev. xiv, 11. Dan. xii, 2. Math. iii, 12. *ib.* xviii, 8. Mark iii, 29. *ib.* ix, 43–48. Jude 7.

Q Will God, through mistake, accident, or otherwise, destroy any of the righteous with the wicked?

A No. That be far from God to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from him: shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Gen. xviii, 25. Job viii, 20. Is. iii, 10, 11. Math. iii, 47–50. Rom. ii, 6–10. 2 Thes. i, 6, 7.

Q. How will it affect the wicked, when they shall see their godly friends and acquaintances taken into heaven, while they themselves are cast out?

A There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of

heaven, and ye yourselves thrust out. Luke xiii, 28.

Q Will not the ungodly, in the world to come, mournfully remember all their slighted and abused mercies and privileges?

A Yes. They will mourn at the last, when their flesh and their body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof: I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me. Pro. v, 11–13. Jer. viii, 20. Luke 16, 25.

Q Will not all holy beings justify and approve the decisions of the last day, by which the righteous are saved, and the wicked destroyed?

A Yes. The heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself. Ps. l, 6. Rev. xix, 1–6.

Q How should we now act, in view of the solemn realities of the future world?

A Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we

neglect so great salvation, as is offered to us in the gospel? Heb. ii, 1–3.

REMARKS.

That sin will be punished, certainly, and adequately, is admitted by all who profess to believe the bible. This punishment the scriptures denominate "the wages of sin;" "the curse of the law;" "the wrath of God," &c: (Rom. vi, 23. Gal. iii, 13. Eph. v, 6,) and we submit the following upon,

First. *The certainty of punishment in a future state.* In a proper sense, punishment implies personal criminality, and can fall alone upon the guilty. It is at once absolute, defamatory, and an expression of the sovereign's displeasure. These criteria of punishment, applying equally to the divine, as to human governments, when duly pondered, will sufficiently demonstrate, that nothing which a man suffers in this world, is the penalty of sin against God. It is not true, for example, that any form of mortal suffering, from the hour of conception to the hour of interment, invariably implies crime, or falls alone upon the wicked; or is disreputable, or is a mark of the divine displeasure, or is to be denied the thousand alleviations of humanity and religion. (Eccl. ix, 2.) Nor does this argument derive a small advantage from the consideration, that no course of the strictest piety can prove an infallible guarantee against either the bodily or mental ills of the present life.

So far from this, it not unfrequently occurs, that the more exemplary and pious are the greatest sufferers, by how much they are the more conscientious and tenderhearted. On the contrary of this however, the following scriptures restrict the *happiness of the wicked* to the present world: (Ps. xvii, 14. Luke vi, 24. *ib.* xvi, 25) assert, that death shall be the annihilation of their hope: (John viii, 14. *ib.* xi, 20. Pro. xi, 7,) that many shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven: (Math. vii, 13, 21–23,) that none, indeed shall, except upon condition of certain previous preparation: (Math. v, 20. *ib.* xviii, 3. John iii, 3. *ib.* viii, 21, 24. Heb. xii, 14,) that some sins involve greater evil, than the greatest earthly afflictions, or even death itself: (Math. xviii, 6–10. *ib.* xxvi, 24. Heb. x, 28, 29) that there is a sin which shall not be forgiven in this world nor the next: (Math. xii, 31, 32. Mark iii, 29. Luke xii, 10. Heb. x, 26. 1 John v, 16, 17) present the death, resurrection, and final retributions of the righteous and the wicked in striking contrast: (Pro. x, 28, *ib.* xiv, 32. Dan. xii, 2. John v, 28, 29. Rom. ii, 6–9) and unequivocally declare that the wicked shall be "punished" and "tormented for ever." (Math. xxv, 46. Jude 7. Rev. xiv, 11.) In a word, the whole remedial scheme executed by Jesus Christ, proceeded upon the supposition of a future punishment, to which we were exposed by the sentence of the violated law. The purpose of his advent and death, was to deliver those

who believe on him from the curse of the law. (Gal. iii, 13,) that "they should not perish but have everlasting life." (John iii, 16. *ib.* x, 28.) This work he has accomplished, and believers are now delivered from condemnation, and are no longer subject to the wrath of God. (Rom. v, 9. *ib.* viii, 1. 1 Thes. i, 10.) Hence, it follows, inevitably, that "the curse of the law," "the wrath of God," "the condemnation" under which we lay, are not to be understood of the ills of this life; and that there is in the world to come, "a certain and fearful judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Heb. x, 27.)

Secondly. *The characteristics of future punishment.* There is scarcely any thing more pitiably uncandid and disingenuous, than a quibble upon the metaphorical language of scripture. Men should remember how little they understand of spirits, and of spiritual things, ere they fault the Holy Ghost with ambiguity, when he would employ terms and phrases of common life, with which to represent things future and unseen. If with the aid of types and familiar symbols, the glories of heaven, and the torments of hell, are but imperfectly apprehended, much less had they been by the technicals of philosophy, and the hieroglyphics of unknown worlds. It was but in condescension to mortal weakness, and for the benevolent designs of our timely "escape from the wrath to come," that the divine hand hath drawn before our eyes the most fearful images of the unutterable wo, to which the finally impeni-

tent are doomed:—representing them, as "burned up with unquenchable fire, where there shall be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth for ever. (Ma. xiii, 49, 50.) These are figures of easy understanding to the simplest minds, and they convey impressions of the most intense and insupportable anguish; and when to these we add, that the wicked shall be exiled "into outer darkness." (Math. xx, 13) beneath the withering anathemas of the great God, (Math. xxv, 41)—where the smallest alleviation to their misery shall be denied them, (Luke xvi, 24–26) and where no cheering beams of hope shall ever arise to dissipate the brooding storms of tempestuous wrath, (Job x, 8. Ps. xi, 6,) it would seem, the picture were sufficiently alarming to arouse the most dormant energies of the soul within to a sleepless vigilance. "lest it come into that place of torment." But O! the society of hell; (Math. xxv, 41. Tim. i, 9, 10. Rev. xxi, 8. *ib.* xxii, 15) and the distracting consciousness of guilt, and fear, and shame—the corroding recollection of abused mercies; (Pro. v, 11–13. Luke xvi, 25) and the insatiable gnawings of the worm that never dies—how these will add bitterness and death to the anguish of the pit! Nor yet is this all. The perpetuity of wo, *is wo.* A thousand ages of the direst wretchedness were tolerable, if beyond them there lay a gleaming prospect of final restoration. But what means that "impassable gulph," (Luke xvi, 26) that "unquenchable fire," (Math. iii, 12,) that "bottomless pit," (Rev. xx, 3,) that "smoke of their

torment that ascendeth up forever and ever?" (Rev. xiv, 11.) These are words of awful import, and fore-token that the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment," and shall "suffer the vengeance of eternal fire." (Math. xxv, 25, 46. Jude 7.)

PART IV.

LESSON XLIII.

THE CHURCH.

QUESTION. What is the christian church?

ANSWER. A christian church is a body of professed believers in Christ, meeting in the same place for the worship of God: and every such company is a distinct and independent church—as "the *church* at Jerusalem," or "the *churches* of Gallatia." Acts xi, 22. Gal. i, 2. Acts xiv, 23, *ib.* xv, 41. Rom. xvi, 5. 1 Cor. i, 2. *ib.* iv, 17. *ib.* vii, 17. *ib.* xi, 16, 18. *ib.* xiv, 23. *ib.* xvi, 1, 19. 2 Cor. viii, 1, 19, 23. Gal. i, 22. 1 Thes, ii, 14. Rev. i, 4.

Q For what purpose hath God instituted a church in the world?

A That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ; and to the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. Eph. i, 12. *ib.* iii, 10. Ps. lxvii, 1, 2, 5. Mat v, 13–16. *ib.* xiii, 33. John xv, 8, 16. Acts viii, 4. Rom. i, 8. *ib.* xiv, 7, 8. *ib* xv, 19. 2 Cor. ix, 13. Eph. ii, 10. 1 Thes. i, 8. 1 Tim. i, 1 6. Tit. ii, 11–14. Heb. xiii, 16. 1 Pet. i, 12. *ib.* 2, 9.

Q On what foundation is every true, christian church built?

A. We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Eph. ii, 29. Is. xxviii. 16. Math. vii, 24. *ib.* xvi, 18, 19. Acts iv, 10–12 1 Cor. iii, 11. 1 Pet. 2, 6.

Q. Do not the scriptures strictly caution us not to build improper and bad materials upon this good foundation?

A Yes. Paul said, According to the grace which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon; for every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it; be-

cause it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 1 Cor. iii, 10, 13. Mat. xiii, 36–40. 2 Cor. vi, 14–18. Tit. iii, 10. 2 John x, 11.

Q What are proper materials, or who are proper subjects for admission into the church?

A They who give good evidence of repentance towards God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are fit subjects for admission into the church and none else but they. Ps. xv, 1–5. Mat. iii, 7, 8. Acts iii, 41, *ib.* viii, 12, 37, *ib.* x. 47, *ib.* xvi, 14, 15, 31–34, *ib.* xviii, 8, *ib* xix, 18–20. Rom. x, 10.

Q In what manner do persons become members of the Church?

A The door of admission into the Church is baptism. For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii, 27. Rom. vi. 3, 17.

Q Is there any inequality in the members of the Church, considered in a strict and religious sense?

A No. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: but ye are all one in Christ Jesus. For we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Gal. iii, 28. Rom

xii, 5. Acts x, 34. Rom. iii, 22, *ib.* x, 12. 1 Cor. xii, 14–27. James i, 9, 10, *ib.* ii, 1–9.

Q By what bond of union, are the members of the church connected together?

A The bonds of church union are a similarity of views, a oneness of heart, and a sameness of purpose: For how shall two walk together, except they be agreed? Amos iii, 3. John xiii, 35. Acts iv, 32. 1 Cor. i, 10, *ib.* iii, 3, *ib.* x, 31. Eph. iv, 13–16. Col. ii, 2. 1 Tim. i, 19, 20. 2 Tim. i, 13. Tit. i. 13, *ib.* iii. 10. 2 John 11.

Q. Should not members of the church, thus united, diligently watch over each other for good?

A Yes. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory: but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves: and let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. Phil. ii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. x, 24. Mat. xviii. 10, 11, *ib.* xx, 24–28. Rom. xiv. i, 15–21. Heb. x, 24.

Q What direction is given us concerning social and public worship?

A That we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhort one another, and so much the more as

ye see the day approaching. Heb. x, 28. Ps. xxvi, 8, *ib.* xxvii, 4, *ib.* lxxxiv, 1–10, *ib.* xcii, 13, *ib.* cxvi, 12–19, *ib.* cxxii, 1. Is. ii, 3. Mal. iii, 16–18. Mat. xviii, 20.

Q Ought not the worship of God to be conducted with feelings of deep humility, reverence and decorum?

A Yes. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God: and be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God. Eccl. v, 1, 2. Ps. xciii, 5. John iv. 22–24. 1 Cor. xiv, 26–40. 1 Pet. ii, 5.

REMARKS.

The term "church," properly signifies an assembly, and that without regard to its character: (A. vii, 38, *ib.* xix. 32, 37, 40) nevertheless, it is now by common consent appropriated to a sacred use, and denotes either the whole body of the redeemed, "whose names are written in heaven;" (Eph. 1, 22, 23, *ib.* v, 25–27. Heb. xii, 23) or any particular society of professed worshipers of God meeting in the same place, holding the doctrines of the apostles and prophets, and "Jesus Christ himself as the chief corner stone." (1 Cor. iv, 17. *ib.* xiv, 23. Mat. xvi, 19. Eph. ii, 20.) It will be perceived, that the lesson above relates to the church in the latter sense: and we remark,

First. *The congregational peculiarity of the christian church.* In contradistinction to a provincial church, in which several communities subsist under the same jurisdiction, the scriptures evidently represent each properly organized community of professing christians as a church complete within itself, having the highest ecclesiastical powers, and acknowledging no superior or head save Jesus Christ. (Eph. iv. 15. Col. i, 18. James iv. 12.) Accordingly, we read of the church at Antioch," "the church at Laodicea," "the church at Babylon," and of "the whole church coming together in one place." (Acts xiii, 1. Col. iv, 16. 1 Pet. v, 13. 1 Cor. xiv, 23.) After the same style also, a multiplicity of such bodies meeting at different points in the same extended territory, are uniformly mentioned in the plural number: as "the churches of the Gentiles," "the churches of Gallatia," "the churches of Macedonia," "the churches of Judea," "the seven churches of Asia," &c. (Rom. xvi. 4. 1 Cor. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. viii. 1. Gal. i. 22. Rev. i. 4, 11.) Nor yet is this all. The apostle distinguishes between different congregations worshiping in the same city. Thus, for example, although Cenchrea was but a seaport of Corinth, yet the "church at Corinth" was wholly independent of the "church at Cenchrea;" and "the church at Rome," was entirely distinct and separate from "the church in the house of Aquilla and Priscilla," meeting, perhaps, in an adjoining street. (Rom. xvi. 1–5. 1 Cor. i. 2.)

Indeed, the congregational independence of the churches, is most clearly implied in every direction relating to the election of officers, and the exercise of a wholesome discipline. (Acts vi, 3. 1 Cor. v, 4–9.)

Secondly. *The mutual co-operation of the churches.* The object of the christian church is the promotion of the divine glory, in the personal well-being of its individual members, and in the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world. Experience has shown, that in the prosecution of this object, innumerable difficulties ever and anon arise, to the removal of which a union of strength is not only expedient, but indispensably necessary. It was thus in the apostolic age; and thus it will be till time shall end. Nor are we without a precedent in the example of the early saints, upon which to concert the mental and pecuniary resources of different churches in the furtherance of any benevolent designs. When the church of Antioch was rent with dissension upon the point of circumcision, they determined to send delegates to confer with the church at Jerusalem touching this question. (Acts xv, 1–31.) In like manner the gospel was first sustained at Corinth by the united contributions of the churches at Macedonia, (2 Cor. xi, 9) and at a later period, in the days of Claudius, when the saints of Judea were thrown into want, by reason of dearth, the church at Corinth, the churches of Macedonia, and the churches of Gallatia, all together combined their strength, and sent them re-

lief. (Acts xi, 27–30. 1 Cor. xvi, 1–3. 2 Cor. viii, 1.) It is, furthermore, worthy of notice, that this co-operation was at the same time under the sanction of the inspired apostle, and yet voluntatary on the part of the churches: shewing to the full, that it is a principle vital to godliness to render every reasonable and harmless measure subservient to usefulness.

LESSON XLIV.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE MINISTRY.

QUESTION. What are the proper officers of the church?

ANSWER. The officers of a church are the pastor, and the deacons. Phil. i, 1.

Q For what purpose did God institute the pastoral office in the church?

A For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Eph. iv, 12, 13.

Q What charge has the apostle delivered to

pastors, respecting both themselves and their respective flocks?

A Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts xx, 28. 1 Tim. iv, 16.

Q Is it not highly important that all ministers should possess ardent and exemplary piety?

A Yes. They should be an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1 Tim. iv, 12, *ib.* iii, 2–7. Tit. i, 6–9.

Q. Do wicked men, probably, ever enter into the ministry by the call of God?

A No. Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, and that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. Ps. l, 16, 17. Mat. vii, 4, 5, 15–23.

Q. What description of pastors did God, in Jeremiah, promise to give his churches in after times?

A Thus saith God, I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you

with knowledge and understanding. Jer. iii, 15.

Q In accordance with this promise, does not God require his ministers to read and study, that they may be "apt to teach?"

A Yes. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim. ii, 15. Mal. ii, 7. 1 Tim. iv, 13–15. 2 Tim. ii, 2. Tit, i, 9.

Q How long did Christ, the best of teachers, retain the apostles under his special instruction before he sent them forth to preach the gospel?

A The apostles were under the instruction of Christ for three years, until they fully understood all things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven before they were sent out to teach others. Mat. xiii, 51, *ib.* 28, 20.

Q What proportion of their time should ministers devote to the duties of their office?

A Give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all: for no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 1 Tim. iv, 15, 16. 2 Tim. ii, 4, 5. Luke ix, 60. Acts vi, 2–4.

Q In order that ministers may be wholly devoted to his service, does not God require the churches to sustain them comfortably?

A Yes. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things: for so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Gal. vi, 6. 1 Cor. ix, 14. Neh. xiii, 10–14. Mal. iii, 8, 9. Luke x, 7. Acts xiii, 2. Rom. xv. 27. 1 Cor. ix, 7–14. 2 Cor, xi, 8, 9. Phil. iv, 10–18. 1 Tim. v, 18. 2 Tim. ii, 6. 3 John 5–8.

Q What is said of the manner in which churches should regard the feelings and reputation of ministers?

A We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work sake. 1 Thes. v, 12, 13. 1 Cor. xvi, 11, 18. Phil. i, 29. 1 Tim. v, 17, 19. Heb. xiii, 7, 17.

Q Is it not very wrong and wicked to receive, or circulate a report injurious to one of God's ministers, without the highest evidence of its truth?

A Yes. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 1 Tim. v, 19. 3 John 9, 10.

Q How should ministers act towards *each other* in view of their comparative ages and circumstances?

A Ye younger submit yourselves unto the el-

der. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. 1 Pet. v, 5.

REMARKS.

It is evidently in accordance with the apostolic usage, that each church should have her individual pastor; and that the pastor should confine his labors, principally, to a single congregation. Hence, we read of "the angel of the church at Ephesus," "the angel of the church at Smyrma," "the angel of the church of the Laodiceans;" and of "Titus left in Crete to ordain elders in every city." (Rev. ii, 1, 8, *ib.* iii, 14. Tit. i, 5.) Indeed, there were as much reason in placing several plantations under the charge of one "overseer," or several flocks under the watch of one shepherd, as there is in one minister assuming the pastoral charge of several churches at remote distances. Aside from the violation of scripture rule, this course is fraught with evils, which they who desire the glory of God, and the good of souls, should sedulously labour to correct. But we proceed to remark,

First. *The piety of the ministry.* Ministerial piety involves the piety of the churches. The one is the certain index of the other. That of the latter rarely or never rises above that of the former. The seal does not better modify the wax, than does a permanent ministry the moral, religious, and intellectual character of the community

among whom he resides. "Like priest like people," is almost universal history. It was, "therefore," not without reason, that the apostle, fixing his eye upon the spiritual well-being of the people, first charged the ministry—"take heed to thyself." (Acts xx, 28. 1 Tim. iv, 16.) They who teach others, should teach themselves also." (Rom. ii, 21–23.) They who would pluck the mote from another's eye, should first cast out the beam from their own eye. (Math. vii, 4, 5.) No reasonable expectation of usefulness in the world can be indulged, farther than the principle of moral courage, the principle of self-denial, the principle of faith, the prompt and punctual obedience to the divine law, is strictly and uniformly maintained: nor is there any method of inculcating these effectually without example. The minister, as the leader of the host of "God's elect," must himself exemplify the virtues of the christian character—must himself evince a courage, that flinches from no embarrassment, a self-denial that holds no wedded gratification, a faith that staggers not at the promises of God, a fidelity whose only watch-word is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do:" and then will the churches arise and shine, in all the activity and strength, in all the zeal and efficiency of primitive times. "Be thou an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4, 12.)

Secondly. *The support of the ministry.* That the ministry should receive from the churches a comfortable support while engaged in the duties

of their office, is beyond question of divine authority. Accordingly, it is, with peculiar emphasis, taught in the scriptures. as a provisional purpose of God in the dispensation of the gospel; (1 Cor. ix, 14) as an act of reciprocal justice in those who are taught in the word; (Rom. xv, 27. 1 Cor. ix, 11. Gal. vi, 6) as involving the spiritual interest of the churches; (Mal. iii, 8–10. Phil. iv, 14–18) and as a means by which they "may be fellow helpers to the truth." (3 John 5–8) To this, it may be added, there is the best evidence, that it was universally customary among the apostolic churches. Not even was the apostle Paul an exception. For, while there are, indeed, three allusions to his manual labor, at Thessalonica, at Corinth, and at Ephesus, (1 Thes. ii, 9. Acts xviii, 3, *ib.* xx, 34) during a period of not exceeding five years out of thirty of his ministry, (while in fact he was but engaged in planting churches in those cities) yet we know, that at the first point, of only six months stay, he was sustained by the church at Philippi; (Phil. iv, 16) and at the second, of a year and a half, he received wages from the churches of Macedonia; (2 Cor. xi, 7–9) and at the third, of three years continuance, he was liberally aided by the house of Onesiphorus. (2 Tim. i, 16–18.) Furthermore, if we remember, that the earliest fruits of the apostle's ministry, in these several cities, were Jews, (Acts xviii, 7. Romans xvi, 21. Acts xviii. 4, 7, 8, 17. Romans xvi, 23. 1 Corinthians i, 1, 14) who, as has been judiciously remarked, were wont to support their christian teachers, as they had pre-

viously done their Jewish leaders, there will appear strong presumption, that after these churches were organized, with the exception of that at Corinth, (1 Cor. xii, 13) they themselves, in whole or in part, sustained the apostle: and although, for prudential reasons, he himself declined a maintenance at the hands of the Corinthians, (2 Cor. xi, 12) nevertheless, even that church acknowledged, and acted upon the principle with regard to her other ministry, (1 Cor. ix, 12) and blamed the apostle himself, because he had refused them that privilege in his case. (2 Cor. xii, 13.) In a word, so universal was this custom, in all the first ages of the christian church, that even Gibbon, in a work by no means designed to subserve the interests of religion, could not forbear to mention it, among the various modes of that benevolence to which the rapid extension of christianity was, under God, mainly indebted.

THIRDLY. *The devotion of the ministry.* It is not material, as to the method by which any one is convinced of his call to the ministry. This he distinctly understands to be the will of God, in relation to him: and it must be allowed that in this matter, as in every other, God, as an intelligent being, specifically contemplates this, and not another, as his employment. Harmonious to this, the scripture doctrine of the ministerial profession, makes it an entire and undivided consecration to the things of the gospel. This appears in the direction given to the church at Antioch; (Acts xiii, 2,) in the charge to Timothy, that he

should endure hardness rather than become entangled in the affairs of this life: (2 Tim. ii, 3–5. 1 Tim. iv, 15. Luke ix, 60,) in the institution of the deacon's office; (Acts vi, 2–4) and in the peculiar mode of the apostle's argument on ministerial support. "Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar: even so, hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9, 13, 14.) Now, the provision for the maintenance of the Levitical ministry, had its origin in their exclusive devotion to a single and sacred office: (Num. xviii, 20, 21. Deut. xiv, 27,) and if the gospel ministry is not in like manner exclusive, then to argue from the support of the one to the support of the other, as the apostle has done in the present case, had been illogical, and could have produced no conviction on the mind of the sagacious and philosophising Corinthians. Indeed, whatever argument proves it to be the duty of the churches to sustain their ministry, will equally prove that the ministry should be "*wholly*" devoted to the spiritual interests of the churches: because, no minister, more than other men, has a moral right, after six days labor in the week about his secular interests, to appropriate to his additional advantage the "wages" of the sabbath. Nor does the example of the apostle Paul at Thessalonica, at Corinth, and at Ephesus, in the slightest sense invalidate these observations, or furnish a precedent upon which

ministers may be secularized. For, to say nothing of the extenuation which he himself offers, thereby tacitly admiting it a departure from the law of the ministry, (1 Cor. ix, 15. 2 Cor. xi, 12. *ib.* xii, 13,) there is no analogy between our circumstances and his, that can render a similar conduct in us, either necessary or excusable. He was at that time in the midst of the heathen, and as yet no church organized. He pursued his craft only at short intervals, and with no designs of wealth. Nor is there any evidence, that even this much was done by any other of the apostles; and if the apostolic example is a rule or reason of our conduct, that of Peter, James, and John, is not less authoritative, than could be that of St. Paul in any case. But there is no difference between them. With their united breath, and their united teaching, they charge us, give thyself wholly to the things of the gospel. "Continue in them, for in so doing, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. iv, 16.)

LESSON XLV.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE DEACONS.

QUESTION. What is the office of the deacons in the church?

ANSWER. The business of the deacons is to aid the pastor in administering the Lord's supper; to re-

ceive and pay out all moneys collected for the benefit of the poor; and to have the oversight of all the temporal concerns of the church. Acts vi, 1, 2.

Q What direction did the apostles give the church at Jerusalem, as to the qualifications of deacons, and the manner of their election?

A Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. Acts vi, 3, 8, 10.

Q Should not the piety of deacons be characterized with sobriety, sincerity and benevolence?

A Yes. The deacons must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre:—holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 1 Tim. iii, 8, 9.

Q What is said of the qualification of deacons, with regard to their families?

A Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 1 Tim. 3, 12.

Q Do not the scriptures also require that deacon's wives, should be women of exemplary piety and goodness?

A Yes. Even so must their wives also be

grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 1 Tim. iii, 11.

Q Ought not the church to be very careful lest they hastily put men into the deacon's office without these divine qualifications?

A Yes. Let them first be proved; and then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 1 Tim. iii, 10.

Q After the church had elected suitable persons to fill the office of deacons, how did the apostles ordain them to their work?

A They were set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. Acts vi, 6.

REMARKS.

There is, perhaps, scarcely any one thing, upon which, under God, the prosperity of the church so much depends, as upon the selection of proper officers. These, to a large extent, give direction and character to all her movements and measures. Nor is this more true of her ministry, than of her deacons. Although this latter is strictly a business office, yet, that business is so intimately connected with almost all her interests, as to render impossible too great caution with regard to the description of persons to whom it shall be entrusted. And we remark,

FIRST. *Deacons should be intelligent men:* and

by this we mean, not so much learned men, as men of quick discernment, and aptness to learn. In every community, there are those who discover a striking difference with regard to their ease and promptness in acquiring knowledge—some, either from the native obtuseness of their mental powers, or from the films of prejudice and self-conceit with which those powers are enveloped, appearing utterly incompetent to distinguish the point of a proposition; while others recieve the truth with all readiness of mind, immediately perceive its force and bearings, and stand prepared to act upon it. Now these latter are they to whom we allude, and to whom the apostle referred in the phrase, "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom:" and if occasions do sometimes arise, where those of eminent learning cannot be found to fill the office of deacon, there surely can occur no period, where, other things beings equal, men of sound and active minds are not to be preferred, above those of an opposite character.

Secondly. *Deacons should be business men*: and by this we mean, neither that industrious worldliness, for which some are particularly remarkable; nor yet, that "good, easy, good-for-nothingness," so peculiar to others. This office does, indeed, relate to temporalities; but they are the temporalities of the house of God: so that one might be practically familiar with all the tactics of accumulating wealth and making fine bargains, and still possess none of the leading elements of a good deacon. Least of all is a mere constitutional

inoffensiveness, though it amount to a sort of negative goodness, that characteristic so necessary in the present case. An active zeal for the poor and needy, an abounding sympathy for the distressed and afflicted, and a skill and dexterity in the management and discipline of the church—these enter essentially into the character of him to whom should be committed this sacred trust.

THIRDLY. *Deacons should be liberal-minded men:* and in this we refer, not so much to their doctrinal views, as to their pecuniary contributions. We are no advocate for that species of charity which allows all opinions to be equally true, or equally innocent; but we would strenuously insist, that every christian holds his wealth only as a steward of God, and to be appropriated according to the calls of necessity and benevolence. It is compatible with "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience," that one should "not be greedy of filthy lucre;" and a hoarding covetousness is not a less disqualification for the deacon's office, than is a lax and careless maintenance of the truth. No one can be fitted to distribute the alms of others, who is not himself "full of good works and alms-deeds." Indeed, no one can render efficient service in collecting the charities of others, who is not himself known to be a charitable man, and ready to all works of mercy and goodness. But,

FOURTHLY. *Deacons should be pious men:* and by this we mean strictly and exemplarily pious. "My Kingdom," said Christ, "is not of this

world." Its origin and end, its rules and regulations, its spirit and government, are all of a heavenly and divine character. Motives of selfishness and worldly policy, of duplicity and intrigue, of pride, and haughtiness, and ambition, find no place in that catalogue of tempers and dispositions which are required of its subjects. Especially, may these find no lodgment in the bosom of those who "bear up its pillars," and sustain its offices. Here, more than in other men, is needed the fulness of all pervading divinity. Here, humility, patience and love, forbearance and pity, sincerity and truth, constancy, devotion and zeal, are indispensable qualifications. "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, who may be appointed to this office:" "And let these first be proved; and then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."

LESSON XLVI.

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH—BAPTISM.

QUESTION. How many christian ordinances are there?

Answer. There are two christian ordinances; baptism and the Lord's supper.

Q What is baptism?

A Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Math. xxviii, 19. 1 Cor. i, 13, 15.

Q What does christian baptism represent?

A Baptism is designed to represent our faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and our conformity thereto: for we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life. Rom. vi, 4. Cor. ii, 12.

Q By whom was baptism first introduced, and where was it administered?

A John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And there went out to him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. This was the first baptism. Math. iii, 1–6. Mark i, 4, 5.

Q Did not our blessed Lord himself put honor

and authority upon John's mode of baptizing, by submitting to it in person?

A Yes. It came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. Mark i, 9–11. Math. iii, 13–17.

Q What reason is given why John also, after this, baptized in Ænon?

A John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there: and the people came and were baptized. John iii, 23.

Q Was this baptism, which John practised of heaven? or was it of men?

A It was of heaven: for God sent him to baptize. John i, 33. Mark xi, 30–33. Luke xx, 4–6.

Q Has God ever authorized any other mode of baptism than that which was introduced by John?

A No. There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Eph. iv, 5.

Q Who are proper subjects to receive baptism?

A The proper subjects for baptism, are such only as give good evidence of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Q What did Peter, on the day of pentecost, command those Jews who were "pricked in their hearts?"

A Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts ii, 38.

Q Were any baptized on that occasion, who did not gladly receive the word?

A No. They that gladly received the word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Acts ii. 41.

Q When Philip went down to Samaria and preached the gospel unto them of that city, did he baptize any except believers?

A No. But when they believed Philip preaching the things of the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts viii, 12.

Q Upon what condition did Philip also promise to baptize the eunuch?

A Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they

both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. Acts viii, 37–39.

Q What is said of those who believe and are baptized?

A He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likness of his resurrection. Mark xvi, 16. Rom. vi, 5.

Q Will baptism have any beneficial effect, unless it is received in the exercise of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ?

A No. Baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. iii, 21.

REMARKS.

Baptism is not so much a *church ordinance*, as it is that, indeed, by which persons are initiated into the church; and when properly received at first, is not to be repeated. But we remark,

First. *The institution of baptism.* Baptism is evidently a *positive* institution: and like every positive law, must needs be observed to the letter, or it is null and void. It is peculiar to *moral laws*, that they may be fulfilled in the spirit, while the letter is infringed; or they may be violated in the

spirit, while the letter is kept. Take, as an instance, the sixth article of the decalogue: "Thou shalt not kill." Now, it is beyond dispute, the spirit of this command may either be broken or not, without any regard to its literal import. Not thus, however, with respect to any of the *positive* ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation. The observance of these latter necessarily involved an absolute compliance with the identical terms in which they were expressed: and in this, we conceive, they were a fair illustration of all *positive* precepts—baptism not less than others. The obligation, in the present case, arising solely from the command, can extend to only what the command clearly enjoins; and to this, it does extend with all the force of the divine authority.

Secondly. *The subjects of baptism.* That it is the duty of those who repent and believe the gospel, to be immediately baptized, will not be questioned by any who regard the precepts and practices of the apostles as authoritative in the present case. But what we mainly desire to remark is, that the entire force of this precedent is opposed to the baptism of any who afford no satisfactory evidence of such zeal and evangelical faith. Hence at Jerusalem, only such were baptized as "gladly received the word;" and at Samaria, men and women were baptized. When they believed Philip, preaching the things of the kingdom of heaven. Hence also, the specific condition upon which this ordinance was administered to the Ethiopian Eunuch; and after the same man-

ner, the house of Cornelius, and the Philipian jailer and his house were baptized, "having received the Holy Ghost," "rejoicing and believing in God." (Acts x, 47. 48. *ib.* xvi, 34. Nor is any thing derogated from these observations by the admission, that some on those occasions were, perhaps, baptized, who were not truly converted. For, while it is conceded, that Simon Magus, for example, was still an unregenerated person; nevertheless, it is palpable that he professed himself a believer antecedent to his baptism: (Acts viii, 13) and if we are careful to note the entire silence of the scriptures respecting the baptism of any of an opposite character, such practices will appear not only gratuitous, but even an innovation upon the divine order.

THIRDLY. *The mode of baptism.* The act of baptism is designed to represent the death, burial and resurrection of Christ: and the sign should needs be conformed to the thing signified. Accordingly, whether we cousult the original import of the terms chosen by the Holy Ghost, in the institution of baptism; or whether we consider the places where it was uniformly administered, *immersion* evidently appears to be the only scriptural mode of baptizing. It is not new to the reading world, that *baptizo* and its derivatives, are invariably employed to denote this ordinance: and that they primarily import immersion, and have been so understood and practised by the Greek church from the apostolic age to the present day. Nor, on the contrary, have all the learned expla-

nations and criticisms, which have been expended on the subject, been sufficient to satisfy the common people long at a time, that John the baptist and apostles did not resort to rivers and other places, where "there was much water," for the purpose of baptizing. But the designs and limits of this work, forbid us to enter into a discussion of this question at great length; and we simply recommend those who desire to see the arguments pro and con, to read the excellent treaties on this subject, by Jewet, Judson, Pengilly, Hinton, Booth, and Carson.

LESSON XLVII.

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH—LORD'S SUPPER.

Q By whom was the Lord's supper instituted, and at what time?

A The Lord's supper was instituted by Jesus Christ himself, the same night in which he was betrayed. 1 Cor. xi, 23.

Q Will you describe the manner in which this was done?

A As Jesus was eating the passover with his disciples, he took bread and blessed, and break it, and gave unto them, saying, take, eat. And after the same manner, he took a cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, all ye drink of it.

Q What was the bread in the Lord's supper designed to represent?

A Jesus said this is my body which is given for you. Luke xxii, 19. 1 Cor. xi, 24.

Q What was represented by the wine?

A He said also, This cup is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Math. xxvi, 28. Mark xiv, 24. Luke xxii, 20. 1 Cor. xi, 25.

Q How long did our Lord intend this feast to be observed in the christian church?

A The feast of the Lord's supper was designed to be observed in the churches to the end of time.

Q Is there any evidence that the early christians who were baptized at Jerusalem and other places, statedly broke the bread of the Lord's supper?

A Yes. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking

of bread, and in prayers. Acts ii, 42, *ib.* xx, 7. Cor. x, 16. Gal. ii, 12.

Q. What reason has the apostle given why this feast should not be neglected?

A For, as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Q What special encouragement to keep this feast, is given in the promise of Christ?

A Jesus said, Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. John vi, 54–57.

Q Will this blessing result to any, unless, while they partake of these emblems, they exercise a strong and living faith in Christ whose death they represent?

A No. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself—not discerning the Lord's body. 1 Cor. xi, 28, 29.

Q In what state of mind did our Lord caution us to receive this feast?

A Jesus said, This do, as oft as ye do it, in

remembrance of me. 1 Cor. xi. 25. Luke xxii, 19.

Q Next to a grateful remembrance of Christ, should not all christians partake of this supper with feelings of sincerity and brotherly affection?

A Yes. Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. v, 8. Rom. xii, 9. 1 Pet. i, 22.

Q When persons commune together at the the Lord's table, do they not profess to be one in their hearts, their manner of life, and in their doctrinal views?

A Yes. The cup which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the commuion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. 1 Cor. x, 16, 17. Amos iii, 3.

Q What direction did Paul give with regard to such members as may be detected in wicked and bad conduct?

A If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an adolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner,—with such an one not keep company, no not to eat. 1 Cor. v, 11—

13. 7. *ib.* x, 20, 21. 2 Cor. 6, 14–18. Eph. v, 7–12. 1 Tim. v, 22.

Q How should we act in relation to those who manifest unsoundness in the great matters of the faith and practice taught in the gospel?

A If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds. 2 John x, 11. Math. xviii, 17. Rom. xvi, 17. 2 Thes. iii, 6, 14. 1 Tim. vi, 5. Tit. iii, 10.

Q After our Lord and his disciples had supped together, what did they then do?

A They sung an hymn and went out. Math. xxvi, 30. Mark xiv, 26.

REMARKS.

As baptism is only a rite of initiation into the church; so the Lord's supper is strictly a church ordinance, and is sometimes called the sacrament, or the eucharist. And we remark,

First. *The perpetuity of the Lord's supper.* That the sacrament of the Lord's supper was designed to be of perpetual observance in the christian church is apparent, from the nature of this institution, from the example of the early christians; and from the directions given of the mode and spirit in which it is to be observed. It is at

once a standing memento of the dying love of Christ towards his followers; (1 Cor. xi. 24–26) and a public annunciation of their fellowship in all the leading points of faith and manners. (1 Cor. x, 16, 17.) Harmonious to this, there is the best evidence, that it was statedly observed by the apostolic churches; (Acts ii, 42, *ib.*, xx, 7. Gal. ii, 12) and they were specifically cautioned to "keep this feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor. v, 8.)

Secondly. *The obligations of the Lord's supper.* Next to the divine authority, the principle of gratitude in the heart of a christian, should naturally excite him, on all suitable occasions, to commemorate the condescending grace of his crucified Master. Nay, when we remember the influence of signs and symbols upon our organized senses, and consider, that in the elements of this feast, we have before us the lively representations of the bleeding and mangled body of our ever blessed Lord, it would seem, that policy itself should suggest a participation at this table, that our faith may be enlivened, and our devotions stimulated. "As the living Father hath sent me," said Christ, "and as I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, shall live by me." (John vi, 57.)

Thirdly. *The frequency of the Lord's supper.* There is no positive precept regulating the frequency with which the feast of the Lord's supper shall be observed. Those who may regard

it the antitype of the Jewish passover, will find authority in this latter institution for only its annual celebration. On the contrary, however, it seems most probable, that the apostolic churches met every Sabbath day for the breaking of bread. (Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi, 1.) But if in connexion with this the example of the churches in the ages next after the apostolic times, is allowed to have any of the force of a precedent in this case, the only rule that can be laid down, will be the exigencies of the occasion. Among these, it was more or less frequent, according to circumstances: the violence of persecution rendering its necessity more frequent, in order to sustain the faith of those who were daily exposed to martyrdom; as the peace and prosperity of the churches allowed its periods to be mere stated and uniform. After all, we cannot forbear to think, that the practice of some churches to observe this feast only semi-annually, or at most once in three months, is too infrequent to subserve its beneficial designs.

Fourthly. *The bars to the Lord's supper.* The prerequisites to the Lord's table, are a soundness in the faith; (2 John x, 11) and a soundness of religious character. (2 Thes. iii, 6, 14. In consonance with this, all religious denominations exclude those from their communion, who have not been baptized: or who subsequent to baptism manifest themselves heterodox in the prime points of the faith of the gospel. After the same manner also, we are strictly cautioned to bar those from our fellowship, who discover a serious de-

fection in their christian deportment, and turn a deaf ear to the pious counsels of the church. (1 Cor v, 11, 13. Mat. xviii, 17.) Indeed, it were impossible to maintain the "unity of the faith," or the piety of the churches, without a strict observance of this necessary and wholesome discipline. It were less than vain to proclaim this an error, or that a sin, while, nevertheless, we receive and fellowship those who are the subjects of the fault. Is not the cup which we bless, the communion of the body of Christ? and is not the bread which we break, the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." He that biddeth an errorist God speed, is partaker of his evil deed." Be not partaker of other men's sins." 1 Cor. x, 16, 17. 2 John xi. 1 Tim. v, 22.)

LESSON XLVIII.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

QUESTION. How should we act towards those who trespass against us in our private and individual capacity?

ANSWER. If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. Mat. xviii, 15, 21, 22. Lev. xix,

16–18. Pro. xv. 1, *ib.* xxiv, 29, *ib.* xxv, 9, 10. Luke xvii, 34. Rom. xii, 17, 21. 1 Cor. xiii, 4. Gal. vi, 1. James i, 20, *ib.* v, 16, 20.

Q Suppose after the most pious and friendly effort to restore him, he shall refuse any satisfaction: what shall we then do?

A If he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. Mat. xviii, 16.

Q But it sometimes occurs, that the offender becomes obstinate and will not hear even these: what must be done in that case?

A If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Mat. xviii, 17.

Q Should not the church exclude from her fellowship all unruly and ungovernable members, who distract her peace and prosperity?

A Yes. I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. xvi, 17. Acts xx, 29, 30. Rom. ii, 8, 9, *ib.* xiv, 3, 15, 21. 1 Cor. viii, 12, 13. Gal.

iv, 17. Eph. v, 21. Phil. ii, 3. 1 Tim. i, 5–7, *ib.* vi, 3–6. James iii, 14–16.

Q What should be done with such ministers and other persons as become heretical in their doctrines, and refuse to retract their wicked errors?

A An heretic after the first or second admonition reject: for if any man preach any other gospel unto you, than ye have received, let him be expelled. Tit. iii, 10. Gal. i, 9. 1 Tim. i, 19, 20. 2 Tim. ii, 16–18, *ib.* iii, 6–9. Tit. i, 10, 11. 2 Pet. ii, 1–3. 3 John 9, 10. Jude iii, 4. Rev. ii, 12–16.

Q It sometimes happens, that those who are neither contentious in their spirit, nor unsound in their doctrines, are, nevertheless, found guilty of some gross and immoral conduct: what are we commanded with regard to these?

A Now, I command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he hath received of us. 2 Thes. iii, 6, 11–45. 1 Cor. v, 11–12. Eph. v, 7–12.

Q How should the church act towards those who afterwards repent of the sins they have com-

mitted, and desire to be restored to her communion?

A. Ye ought to forgive him, and comfort him, lest, perhaps, such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love toward him. 2 Cor. ii, 7, 8.

REMARKS.

The offences of church members are of two kinds: *public* and *private*. By the latter, we understand the insults or injuries inflicted by one person upon another in their private intercourse, and which are wholly unknown to any besides themselves individually. The law of their settlement, is that contained in Mat. xviii, 15–18: and a departure from this rule were an irregularity to be reproved. Public offences, on the contrary, include all notorious scandals, whether of a personal or general character: and are at once to be the subject of church action. But we remark,

First. *The object of church discipline.* As the discipline of the church includes, both instruction and censure; so its object is three fold:

(1) *The benefit of the offender.* Not, indeed, his imaginary good—his temporal interest and standing in the world: not his momentary gratification—but his real, spiritual, and eternal well being. It is to teach him "not again to blaspheme," and "that the spirit may be saved in

the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Tim. 1, 20. 1 Cor. v, 5.)

(2) *The benefit of the innocent.* It is to be an admonition to those who are also exposed to temptation, and, as far as possible to deliver them from the infectious example of a notorious transgressor. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (1 Cor. 15, 33, *ib.* v, 6–17. 1 Tim. v, 20.)

(3) *The benefit of the christian cause.* The honor of religion in general, is perhaps, the highest, as it certainly is the ultimate object of all things relating to the church. This is to be "the alpha and the omega—the first and the last," in all her actions. On this account it is, that she is commanded to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. but rather reprove them"—to "let her light so shine, that men seeing her good works, may glorify her Father which is in heaven"—and "in all things to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." (Eph. v, 11. Mat. v, 16. Col. i, 10.)

Secondly. *The mode of church discipline.* The designs contemplated in the discipline of the church, suggests the following rules as to the manner in which it should be done.

(1) *It should be prompt:* and this we oppose to that ceremonious postponing of church action so prevalent in some places. Discipline is the

church's reprobation of nefarious wrong: and if the objects specified above can render it necessary at all, they do equally render it necessary at once. Accordingly, it is the concurrent judgment of those who are most distinguished for their wisdom and skill in church polity, that as soon as the offence is clearly proved, the offender should be placed under a merited censure. Nay, the inspired apostle himself, fixing his eye upon the weekly assemblages of the church, strictly charges, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together and my spirit, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v, 4, 5.)

THIRDLY. *It should be tender:* and this we oppose alike to a haughty rashness, and to an effeminate weakness. The discipline of the church should be firmly maintained; but maintained with mildness and affection. We should not wink at sin; nevertheless, we should "not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." "If any man," said the apostle, "obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy; but admonish him as a brother." (2 Thes. iii, 14, 15.) Look well to the nature of the offence, and to the circumstances of the offender: and let the flagrancy of the one and the intelligence and motives of the other, determine the severity of the rebuke: but let the re-

buke itself be administered with the meekness and gentleness of christ.

Fourthly. *It should be impartial.* What tho' such an one "is of reputation" in the world? What though he is "near akin" to ourself? In the church of God, we may "know no man after the flesh." (2 Cor. v, 16.) "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. but all are one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii, 28.) Here, we may know neither father nor mother; neither husband nor wife; neither son nor daughter; neither brother nor sister." (Deut. xxxiii, 9.) Whatever reason renders discipline necessary in any case, must render it equally necessary in every similar case. No one should fear it, if he remain innocent; and no one should expect to avoid it, if he commit sin. "It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment. He that saith to the wicked, 'Thou art righteous;' him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: but to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them." (Pro. xxiv, 23–25.)

Fifthly. *It should be in concert.* The discipline of the church, is not the business of the pastor alone: nor of the pastor and deacons conjointly. It is the business of the church—the whole church. The duty is equally imperative upon one, as upon another—upon all, as upon any, to see to it, that "the old leaven be purged away from the lump"—to see to it, that "the wicked person be put away from the body." If the good

of the offender; the good of the innocent; and the glory of God, are sufficient reasons to justify this action in any, it is not less sufficient to justify it in all. No man may from motives of selfishness and interest, of friendship and popularity, of moral cowardice and fear, absent himself, or otherwise decline to sustain the action of his brethren. "We must act in concert, or we had as well do nothing. Members who violate this rule, are partakers of other men's sins: and themselves deserve the rebukes of the church, for counteracting her measures."

FINIS.

ERRATA.

The reader will please make the following corrections with his pen:

PAGE.

220 line 3d from bottom read "phrases" for "the phrases"
232 " 5 " " " diverse senses" for "the diverse sense."
233 " 3 " " "we behold" for "behold"
239 " 1 at top "have" " "hath"
256 " 10 from top under "remarks" read "this precedence" for their precedence"
259 " 7 " top "insignificance" for "significance"
277 " 10 " " "these numerous" for "the numerous"
278 " 5 from bottom "who chose of the" for "chose thee"
279 " 14 " bottom "fore-knowledge" for "foreknow"
" " 16 " " "foreknow" for "foreknowledge"
306 " 18 " " "alteration" for "attention"
" " 2 " " "denominates" for "demonstrates"
309 " 6 " top "mitigate" for "militate"
349 " 8 " bottom read "real" for "zeal".
351 " 4 " top "the apostles" for "apostles"

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